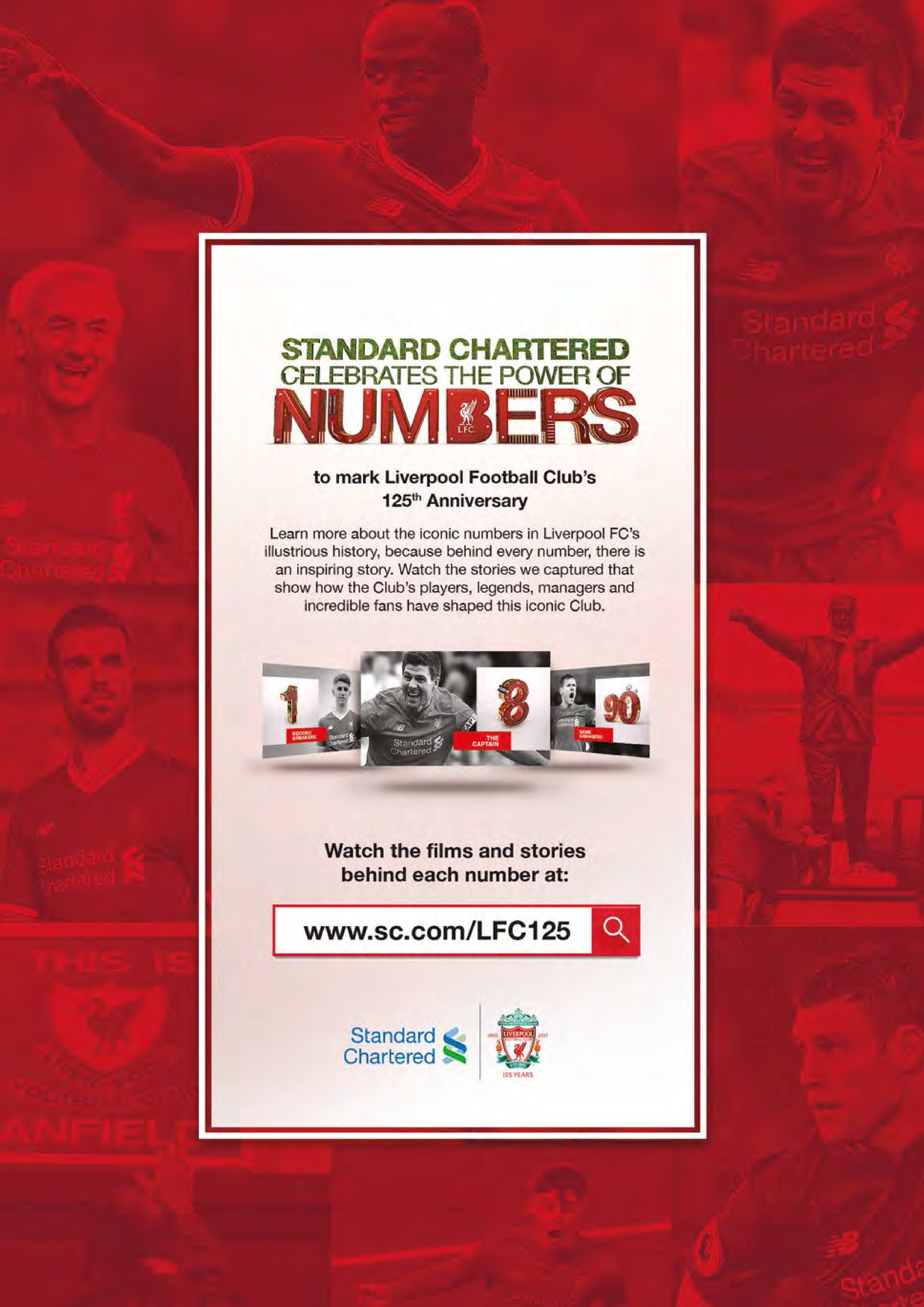
Dejan Lovren | Trent Alexander-Arnold | Awesome fans gallery | Kenny Dalglish | 2018/19 home kit




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ISSUE 70 JUNE 2018

A special Champions League final preview edition as the Reds look to end a memorable season by winning a sixth European Cup in Kiev. Allez Allez Allez!

LIVERPOOL

The lively front section exploring the wider LFC world and keeping fans up-to-date with what's happening at home and abroad

FOOTBALL

The stuff that happens on the pitch: exclusive interviews with current stars, the stats that matter plus blasts from the past

CLUB

Reaching out to communities at home and abroad, plus Anfield updates and the latest awesome official merchandise



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Sadio Mane celebrates the Reds' semi-final success with travelling supporters – roughly how many were in the away section in Rome? **Answer on page 98**

Highlights from the Italian job plus the best social-media reaction

LIVERPOOL


LFCNH
LFCNH
SONY



ROME SWEET ROME
Liverpool are in the Champions League final, and a group of weary heroes salutes a phalanx of sensational supporters in one corner of an otherwise empty Stadio Olimpico. This team seems to feed off the energy of its fans who in turn are inspired by the manager and tales of derring-do from LFC's illustrious past. We've won it five times, it might just be six very soon, and either way it's been another fabulous ride.



OH MANE MANE!
Striker Sadio can't resist running over to the travelling Reds to celebrate Liverpool's aggregate 7-6 victory over AS Roma to reach the final in Kiev on Saturday 26 May. He couldn't quite find the net on the night but already has nine goals from ten previous games in this season's competition, including a hat-trick away to Porto in the round of 16 and one each against Man City and Roma. One or two more against Real Madrid would certainly not go amiss!


STEWARD
175
LIVERPOOL WAS
MADE FOR ME
& I WAS MADE
FOR LIVERPOOL



Reds ON INSTAGRAM

A Champions League special after a special night down the East Lancs





@jhenderson What a feeling! So proud of everyone to reach the champions league final! Thanks for the amazing support as always!!! #YNWA





@lorisk21 CHAMPIONS LEAGUE FINAL!!! ❤️ ⚽ 🙌





@liverpoolfc 🎶 ALLEZ ALLEZ ALLEZ 🎶 #LFC #LiverpoolFC #UCL #UCLfinal #ChampionsLeague





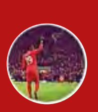
@linda_pizzuti Ahhhhhhhh!! We made it!! Liverpool is going to the Champions League Final!!! 8th time for the historic LFC. We'll see Madrid in Kiev. #ucl #lfc #liverpoolfc #championsleague #hellomadrid #Kiev #championsleaguefinal #ynwa #romliv @liverpoolfc #AllezAllezAllez





@dejanlovren06 Aaaaaaaaaaaaaa @championsleague final here we come!!!! Love you all 😄





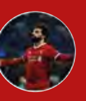
@sadiomaneofficiel 👆 what a night 👆 💪





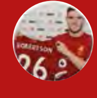
@jamesmilnerofficial Looked like great scenes in the dressing room... I heard them from the drug testing room 🙈 🙈 #waitforme #celebrateonmyown #hopeshowerstillhot





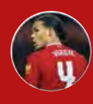
@mosalah22 Final 🙌 🔴 🏆 ! #YNWA





@andyrobertson94 WHAT A FEELING!! Champions League final!! 🙈 fans were incredible tonight, safe travels home!! See you all in KIEV..... ❤️ #YNWA





@virgilvandijk KYIV HERE WE COME!! 💪





@liverpoolhearts Those who travel have stories to tell. You bet. Kiev here we come. #bravo #reds #kopites #anfieldaway #supporter #lfc @championsleague

A ROUND FOR ANNE

Annual golf day calls for donations for charity supported by Reds ace Trent Alexander-Arnold

This year will see the sixth Memorial Golf Day for Anne Williams, who passed away in 2013 and whose 15-year-old son Kevin died at Hillsborough. It takes place at Huyton & Prescot Golf Club on Friday 6 July 2018 with 70 golfers taking part.

In the past various causes have benefited from the funds raised and this year's main charity is An Hour for Others, based in Anfield, which is proud to have Trent Alexander-Arnold as an ambassador.

If you can donate items that can be raffled or auctioned, please contact **SeanDoyle1966@hotmail.com** or visit **gofundme.com/l96x2o**.

Meanwhile a very special football has returned to Runcorn after a spell on loan at the LFC museum, whose curator Stephen Done explains:

"It commemorates an FA Cup third-round meeting between Runcorn FC and Preston North End in 1939 at the old Canal Street ground, and among the signatures on it is that of William Shankly as well as the date and location of the game.

"It is now back in the right place, having been with us while Runcorn Linnets built a new clubhouse at their Millbank Stadium."



"I love watching our team celebrate a goal – it all comes from Klopp"



Having recently presented Ian Rush with a prestigious sports award, it was clear which team Sadiq Khan supported – and the Mayor of London was duly delighted to be a guest columnist in the LFC matchday programme for the Champions League game with Roma.

"When I was growing up and just getting into football," he wrote, "Liverpool were the most exciting team. I loved King Kenny and Ian Rush, and Souness led from the front. We played with flair, style and had a winning mentality.

He continued: "I've been to a few games over the years – my last one was Watford away at the start of this season, the 3-3 draw when Mo scored on his debut. In fact the style of football we're playing now reminds me of great Liverpool teams of the past: the pass-and-move, attacking flair, and also the team spirit. I love to see the team celebrating a goal together – and they obviously feed off the wonderful personality of Jürgen Klopp."

World Cup book competition winners: C Harrison, Prenton; R Warner, Norwich; C McKenzie, Frodsham.

WHAT'S



ON: MAY/ JUN



ALL ROADS LEAD TO KIEV

It's the dream final, said BT Sport anchorman Gary Lineker as the channel's coverage of the semi-final triumph over Roma came to an end. "It's Klopp v Zidane, it's Salah v Ronaldo and it's Liverpool v Real Madrid."

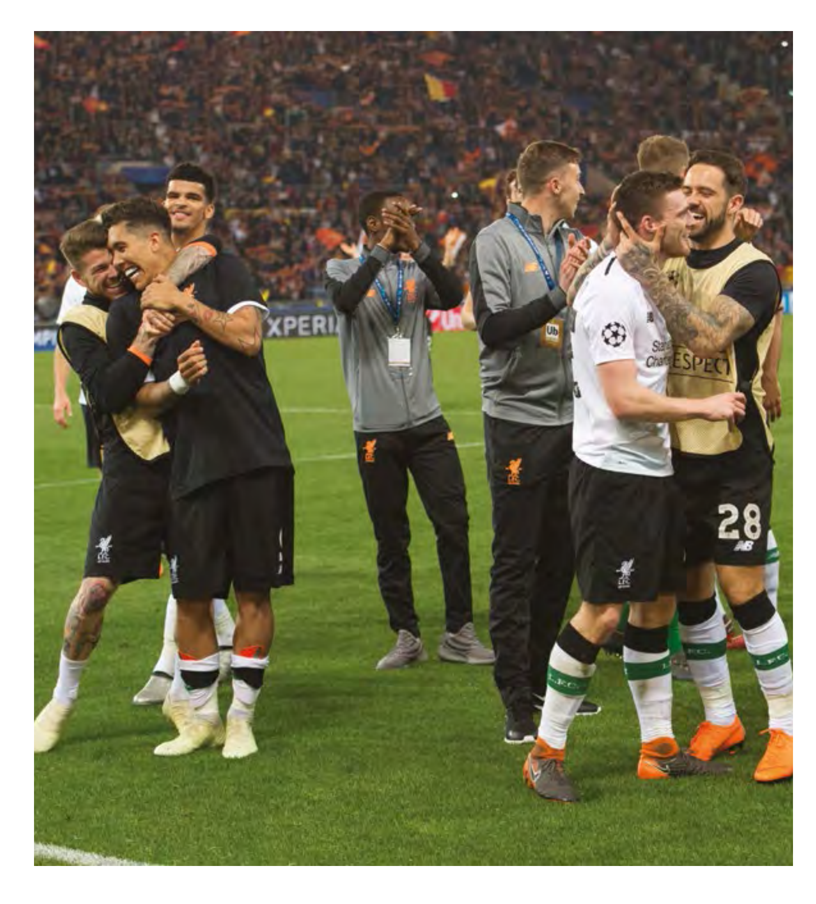
On Saturday 26 May 2018 the Reds will be looking to win the club's sixth European Cup/Champions League. Kopites around the globe will be hoping the city of Kiev will join Rome, Paris, London and Istanbul as one of special meaning.

Standing in the way of Jürgen's men and a sensational end to a stunning season of flamboyant football are Real Madrid. The Spanish giants will be aiming to become the first team to win the trophy for three seasons in a row since Bayern Munich in the mid-1970s. Los Blancos are also bidding to win the trophy for an incredible 13th occasion.

Kiev stands on both banks of the river Dnipro. Located in the centre of Ukraine, it's warm in the spring and summer, has plenty of beaches and is a little over 2,000km from London and Paris, and roughly equidistant from New York and Shanghai. The capital of the country, it has a population of around 2.8 million.

The game will be played at the NSC Olimpiyskiy Stadium which was originally built to host the second All-Ukrainian Spartakiad (or Games). The ground was opened in August 1923 and currently has a capacity of just over 70,000.

Liverpool have played one competitive Champions League game there before, beating Dynamo Kiev 2-1 in a group stage game in October 2001 thanks to goals from Danny Murphy and Steven Gerrard.



WHAT'S ON:



BRAZIL AND CROATIA FACE OFF IN L4

Anfield plays host to international football as Roberto Firmino's Brazil face Dejan Lovren's Croatia in a friendly on Sunday 3 June.

Brazil are among the favourites to lift the World Cup in Russia, having navigated the South American preliminaries with just one defeat in 18 games, and they boast a wealth of star names including Reds forward Bobby, Neymar, Philippe Coutinho and Gabriel Jesus.

Dejan's country, meanwhile, booked their place at the finals via a play-off victory over Greece after finishing second in their qualifying group.

Davor Suker, president of the Croatian Football Federation, says he is "proud that we have managed to agree this spectacular match in Liverpool. We are especially looking forward to enjoying the atmosphere at Anfield, where Croatia has never played before – it's a historic venue and I am convinced that our players will enjoy this match, along with our fans and all spectators. A match between two great sides such as Brazil and Croatia is surely worthy of such an iconic stadium."





Anniversaries and birthdays



13 years since the Miracle of Istanbul on 25/26 May 2005.
41 years since Liverpool claimed their first European Cup on 25 May 1977.
37 years since Alan Kennedy gave the Reds European Cup no3 on 27 May 1981.
126 years since Liverpool FC was born on 3 June 1892.

It will be 41 years since Liverpool claimed their first European Cup on 25 May 1977.

Liverpool fans partied long into the night after watching their team conquer Borussia Moenchengladbach in Rome.

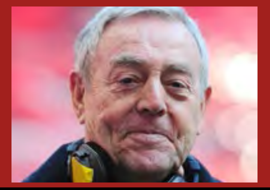
Terry McDermott opened the scoring in the 27th minute after Kevin Keegan dragged Berti Vogts out of position to open up space for the midfielder to run into.

The German champions levelled six minutes after the interval when Allan Simonsen seized onto a loose pass by Jimmy Case and rifled the ball past Ray Clemence. Suddenly Gladbach were on top and, but for a series of one-on-one saves by Clemence they'd have been ahead and possibly out of sight. Instead the scores remained level and Liverpool hit Borussia with a sucker-punch.

Tommy Smith, at the age of 32, was playing in place of the injured Phil Thompson in what was expected to be his final appearance in a red shirt. With 64 minutes on the clock he went up for a corner and rose above two German defenders to power a header into the back of the net for his first goal since 1974!

When Keegan ran at a tired Berti Vogts 10 minutes from time he was upended in the box and Phil Neal converted from the penalty-spot. With that, the Reds were champions of Europe.

Marko Grujic **22** on 13 April
Howard Gayle **60** on 18 May
Jimmy Case **64** on 18 May
Torben Piechnik **55** on 21 May
Pedro Chirivella **21** on 23 May
Joe Gomez **21** on 23 May



Nicky Tanner **53** on 24 May
Vladimir Smicer **45** on 24 May
Steven Gerrard **38** on 30 May
Bethany England **24** on 3 June
Ian St John 80 **on 7 June**
Javier Mascherano **34** on 8 June

FIXTURES 2017/18

AUGUST

Sat 12	Watford (A)	3-3
Tue 15	Hoffenheim (A) UCL	2-1
Sat 19	**Crystal Palace** (H)	1-0
Wed 23	**Hoffenheim** (H) UCL	4-2
Sun 27	**Arsenal** (H)	4-0

SEPTEMBER

Sat 9	Manchester City (A)	0-5
Wed 13	**Sevilla** (H) UCL	2-2
Sat 16	**Burnley** (H)	1-1
Tue 19	Leicester City (A) CC3	0-2
Sat 23	Leicester City (A)	3-2
Tue 26	Spartak Moscow (A) UCL	1-1

OCTOBER

Sun 1	Newcastle United (A)	1-1
Sat 14	**Manchester United** (H)	0-0
Tue 17	Maribor (A) UCL	7-0
Sun 22	Tottenham Hotspur (A)	1-4
Sat 28	**Huddersfield Town** (H)	3-0

NOVEMBER

Wed 1	**Maribor** (H) UCL	3-0
Sat 4	West Ham United (A)	4-1
Sat 18	**Southampton** (H)	3-0
Tue 21	Sevilla (A) UCL	3-3
Sat 25	**Chelsea** (H)	1-1
Wed 29	Stoke City (A)	3-0

DECEMBER

Sat 2	Brighton (A)	5-1
Wed 6	**Spartak Moscow** (H) UCL	7-0
Sun 10	**Everton** (H)	1-1
Wed 13	**West Brom** (H)	0-0
Sun 17	AFC Bournemouth (A)	4-0
Fri 22	Arsenal (A)	2-2
Tue 26	**Swansea City** (H)	5-0
Sat 30	**Leicester City** (H)	2-1

JANUARY

Mon 1	Burnley (A)	1-0
Fri 5	**Everton** (H, FAC 3)	2-1
Sun 14	**Manchester City** (H)	4-3
Mon 22	Swansea City (A)	0-1
Sa 27/Su 28	**West Brom** (H, FAC 4)	2-3
Tue 30	Huddersfield Town (A)	3-0

FEBRUARY

Sun 4	**Tottenham** (H)	2-2
Sun 11	Southampton (A)	2-0
Wed 14	Porto (A) UCL	5-0
Sat 24	**West Ham United** (H)	4-1

MARCH

Sat 3	**Newcastle United** (H)	2-0
Tue 6	**FC Porto** (H) UCL	0-0
Sat 10	Manchester United (A)	1-2
Sat 17	**Watford** (H)	5-0
Sat 31	Crystal Palace (A)	2-1

APRIL

Wed 4	**Man City** (H) UCL q-f 1	3-0
Sat 7	Everton (A)	0-0
Tue 10	Man City (A) UCL q-f 2	2-1
Sat 14	**AFC Bournemouth** (H)	3-0
Sat 21	West Brom (A)	2-2
Tue 24	**Roma** (H) UCL sf 1	5-2
Sat 28	**Stoke City** (H)	0-0

MAY

Wed 2	Roma (A) UCL sf 2	2-4
Sun 6	Chelsea (A)	0-1
Sun 13	**Brighton & HA** (H)	
Sat 26	Real Madrid (UCL final, Kiev)	

*UCL = UEFA Champions League



FOUNDATION DAY 17/18

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- Have a kick-about with Mané pitchside
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LIVERPOOL WAS
MADE FOR ME
& I WAS MADE
FOR LIVERPOOL
CHARLIE LEA
Forever with us
LIVERPOOL FC



Answer page 98

How we got there, player previews, the fans, and in-depth analysis

FOOTBALL

MORE MORE MORE

That's the Mohamed Salah mantra when it comes to goals, trophies and teamwork


L.F.C.
Standard
Chartered

When news broke about Liverpool's signing of Mohamed Salah on Friday 23 June last year, few Reds could have foreseen the impact that the Egyptian flank-hugging forward would make.

And as Mo comes to the end of his first season at Anfield, the exciting thing for Liverpudlians is that he not only feels he can get better, he firmly believes that he will.

A look at Salah's career path so far shows year-on-year improvement and the no11 is not expecting to see his curve plateau-out just yet.

The PFA Player of the Year is one of only three men to score 40 goals in a season for Liverpool. Indeed, he's one of only 13 to net thirty. And while he concedes it may be tough to match his numbers next season, he will certainly give it a good go and says it's a privilege to see his name listed alongside such Anfield goalscoring greats.

"To get 30 or more is something I wanted to do. But now I have 40-plus so I am happy about 40!

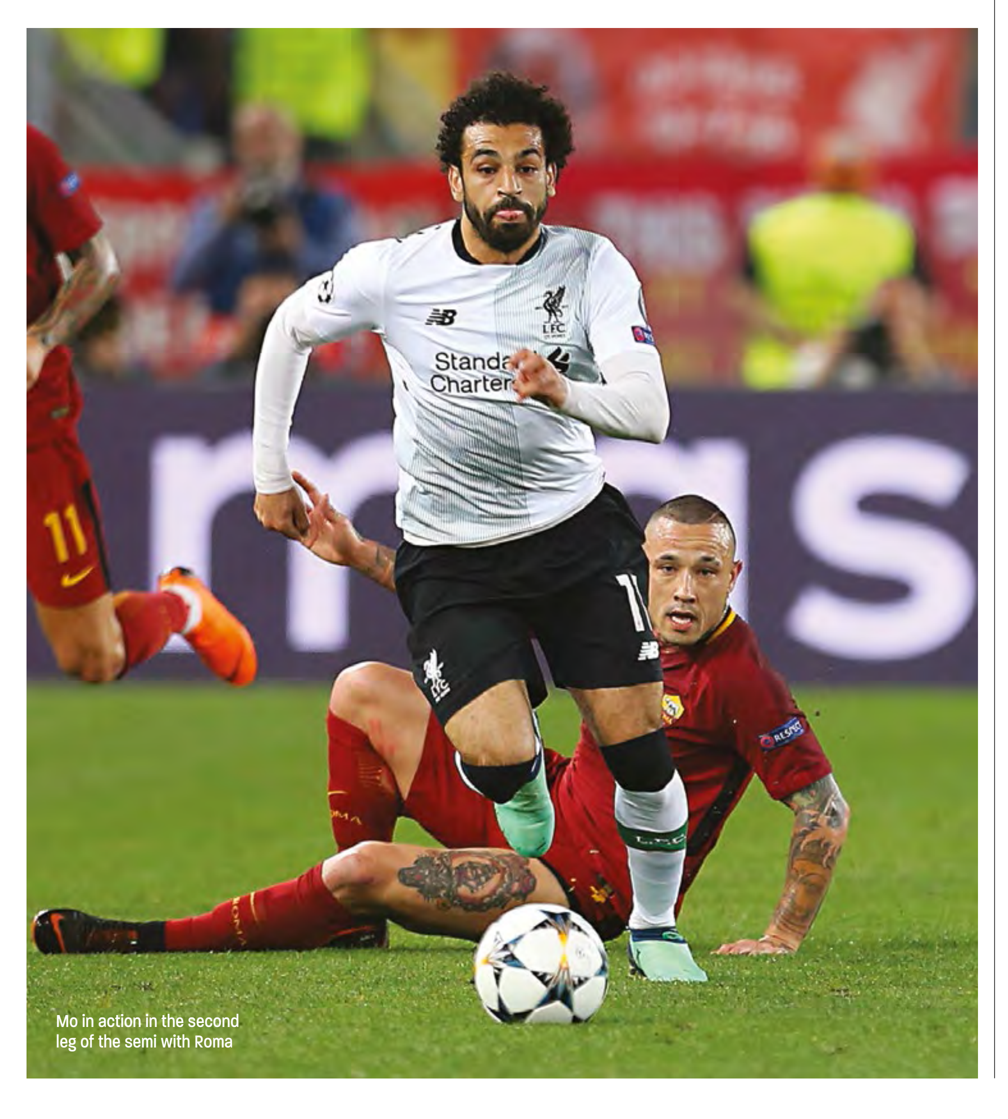
"I know those other players are legends for the club. They had some amazing seasons and I know some of them too. I even played with [Fernando] Torres at Chelsea and I know he scored 33 when he was with Liverpool. They are big names and it is always good when you see your name alongside legends of the club, especially at a club like Liverpool.

"It is a different feeling and I am very happy about that, but I always try to look towards myself and I want more, I want more, I want more.

"Once I reached 40 I said to myself: 'Why not be number one?' I will try my best to break the record of Ian Rush [47] but as I have said before, we play as eleven players and I always play for the team.

"It is not about individual records or awards, it is about achieving something for the team, and I am always sure that if I had a chance to give it to someone else to score, I will give it to him. It's not about me, it's about us."

With 14 assists, including a couple to go with his vital brace of goals in the Champions League semi-final first leg against former club AS Roma, there is no doubting that.



Mo in action in the second leg of the semi with Roma




QATAR
AIRWAYS
MANOLAS
44

Salah has torn up the record books this season and one milestone he was particularly pleased to reach was that of most Premier League goals in a season by an African player. He reveals that he had a conversation some years back with the previous holder of that feat, Ivory Coast striker Didier Drogba, whom he played alongside at Chelsea. Drogba's record was 29 in the 2009/10 season.

"Honestly, being the highest-scoring African player in a Premier League season is a great feeling. I was talking to Didier a long time ago and we were talking about scoring goals and he said: 'Please break my record!' I said: 'Okay, I will!'

"He is a funny guy. I love him and he is my friend. When I scored 30 goals in the Premier League, I was the first African to reach this number so I am very proud about that and also very proud when the people there see my as an idol or something like that.

"Would I like to beat Didier's overall record of 100 Premier League goals? It's always in my mind to get more. I feel like: I want, I want, I want. So that's why I have it in my mind, I want to do something special, I want to do something different. This year I have been doing something good for myself and also good for the club. So yes, hopefully I can keep going."

IT'S NOT ABOUT INDIVIDUAL RECORDS OR AWARDS, IT'S ABOUT ACHIEVING SOMETHING WITH THE TEAM

On the subject of his home continent, Salah's season also included an international highlight when he kept his nerve to convert an injury-time penalty against Congo in October to send Egypt to this summer's World Cup finals – the Pharaohs' first appearance at the finals since 1990.

"I knew one month before that game that I was going to shoot it if there was a penalty," he says. "I prepared myself that if there was a penalty, I would shoot it like that.

"Of course I did not know that when the penalty came it was going to be after 94 minutes. But it was still in my mind that I had taken the decision to say I will shoot it like that and I would not change my mind. I managed to shoot it well and it was the most important penalty of my career.

"That goal is not going to change my life but it is still something huge when you qualify for the World Cup after 28 years. You know it is special: a special moment in my career."

That clarity of thought in front of goal has been a trademark of Salah's season. Despite what was at stake in that game for Egypt and in other big occasions such as the Champions League games against Manchester City and Roma, he has never panicked in front of goal.



Champions League finalist!

His mental processes are sharpened by a daily period of reflection built into his routine. "Every day I give myself an hour or so to think about myself: about the past, about the future, just to relax, to be alone and to switch off from what is around. I look to myself and I remember everything that has happened in the past and that is something that has made me stronger."

Mo has duly helped boost the feel-good factor around Anfield on matchdays and admits to being heartened at seeing Egyptian flags flying on the Kop before home games as well as hearing his name being sung during them.

"It is something that touches my heart. It is always a good feeling when you see the flag and when you hear your name in the stadium. I am very happy about that and very proud.

"The fans have a few songs for me. My favourite? 'Egyptian King'. I like it too much! Some of the other players even sing it in the dressing-room! But those are things that make me work harder and put pressure on myself to give more and perform better."

Most LFC goals in one season

47 **Ian Rush** 1983/84

43 **Mohamed Salah*** 2017/18

42 **Roger Hunt** 1961/62

40 **Ian Rush** 1986/87

37 **Roger Hunt** 1964/65

36 **Robbie Fowler** 1995/96

33 **Fernando Torres** 2007/08; **Ian Rush** 1985/86; **Roger Hunt** 1963/64; **John Evans** 1954/55

32 **Roger Hunt** 1965/66; **Billy Liddell** 1955/56

31 **Luis Suarez** 2013/14; **Robbie Fowler** 1996/97; **Robbie Fowler** 1994/95; **John Aldridge** 1988/89; **Ian Rush** 1982/83; **Kenny Dalglish** 1977/78; **Billy Liddell** 1954/55

30 **Luis Suarez** 2012/13; **Ian Rush 1981/82;** **Roger Hunt** 1967/68

*Up to and including 6 May 2018.



Interview: William Hughes


M.SALAH
11
QATAR AIRWAYS



EVERY DAY I GIVE MYSELF AN HOUR OR SO TO SWITCH OFF AND THINK ABOUT THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

Despite the fact that he has now assumed superstar status as a result of his exploits on the Premier League, Champions League and international stages, he remains humble and grounded. Reflecting on his roots in Egypt's northern region of Gharbia, helps him in this regard.

"You know, I never forget where I came from. It is always on my mind. I don't think there are many differences between me and you or someone else. We are all human beings and we are all trying to do our jobs in the best way. I respect everyone as a person. And whenever I have a chance to go back to my village, I always go. I always remind myself where I come from."

Lest we forget this is Mohamed Salah, a player who joined Chelsea in January 2014 and made only 13 Premier League appearances for the Blues before being shipped out on loan to Fiorentina and Roma.

He left the Premier League in February 2015. Three years later, at the age of 25, he is one of its biggest attractions. So what changed in the intervening period?

"Honestly, a lot as a person and also as a player in a different country and a different culture and, of course, the way they play in Italy is very different. But as I have said many times before, from the first day I left England I said I wanted to come back one day and that I wanted to be a success in the Premier League.

"When you look back at the first interview I gave for Liverpool, I said: "I'm happy to be back and I want to show everyone my football'. That's been working well and I am happy about that."

Salah is clearly extremely settled in the environment at Liverpool and says the belief shown in him by Jürgen Klopp, his team-mates and the supporters helped him settle quickly.

"When I spoke to the boss for the first time, I felt like I was happy to come here. He is an honest guy and he is also very serious. He gives you the point exactly and tells you exactly what he wants to see. Also, because they spent a lot of money on my



transfer, I felt a lot of trust from the club and from the manager. It's helped me a lot to go into the team, feel comfortable and to succeed here."

His link-up with Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mane has been devastating. Statistically speaking, the attacking trident are the most lethal in Liverpool's 125-year history, sharing 89 goals between them going into the last Premier League game against Brighton and the Champions League final with Real Madrid.

"I have always said before that the players here at Liverpool make it easier for me and we also try to help each other in every game. But Bobby, Sadio and myself can't forget the centre-backs, the full-backs and the midfielders who are also fighting for 90 minutes, running a lot and trying to get the ball back and give it to us to make the difference.

"They also give us good passes to score, so we play as a team and everyone tries to give 100 per cent in each game. Everyone tries to perform better and it's working with us because we like each other as people first, and also inside the field we play well together."

Their contributions could yet bring one of the biggest rewards win the game with the Reds ready to fight for a sixth European Cup success when they take on Real Madrid at the NSC Olimpiyskiy Stadium in Kiev on 26 May.

"The Premier League this year was over [by mid-April] and you have to say that Manchester City deserved to win it. So the Champions League is the only chance we have to win something this year and it is something huge. If you win the Champions League for a club like Liverpool, it is something different for us as players, for the fans, for the city, for everyone.

OF COURSE WE CAN WIN IT – WE ARE IN THE FINAL AND ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN

"Of course, we can win it. We are in the final and anything can happen. Also in the last games we have beaten Manchester City and Roma who are two of the best teams in the world. We need to take one more step to win one game. I am sure we will fight for that more than 100 per cent to make it happen. Let's see."

Salah's displays in his favourite no11 shirt this season has seen his name bracketed with Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo in shaping new conversations about the best footballers on the planet. Like Messi he likes to take lots of touches on the ball, keeping it moving with his quick feet and low centre-of-gravity to put defenders off their stride.

"This is the way I play and I try to enjoy the game in every match I play. Each game is a new challenge for me. I want to score. I want to help the team. I want the team to win.

"It's my way. I like to keep the ball close to me. I like to keep the ball, do some skills, score goals and try to make a difference.

"Its a good feeling to hear that people compare me with these kind of players [Messi and Ronaldo] but they have been at the top level for 12 to 15 years. Anyone can say what they want, but I always look to myself and know I need to improve myself in every game, every week and every season."

And so, talking of next season… "Of course I hope that next season is better than this one, though of course

THE FLAGS AND SONGS ARE THINGS THAT MAKE ME WANT TO WORK HARDER AND GIVE MORE

I know this season is unbelievable. I have scored many goals and helped the team. Hopefully next season will be one where the team wins titles but I have to work hard because I need to perform like this or better next year.

"As I said before, every year I look at improving myself mentally and physically and working on my weaknesses and I am very happy about that because the result is good year after year after year. It is a little bit of pressure but it is something that makes me work harder to be in a better way."



Mo is promising 100 per cent from everyone against Real Madrid



Let's hear it for Bobby's new contract extension!

DON'T LOOK NOW!

Roberto Firmino turns the other way – but only to sign his new Reds contract!

What better way to mark your career-best season as a footballer than extending your stay at a club you've come to love and thrive at, in the same week as booking a place in a Champions League final!

Roberto Firmino, Liverpool's goal and assist machine has put pen to paper – looking the other way in trademark scoring style – on a contract extension that his manager Jürgen Klopp has described as "unbelievably important news, really cool."

Our beaming Brazilian was delighted to pledge his future to the Reds. "It was an easy decision," he said. "The club have taken me in an incredible way and I've grown a lot here with my work with the support of the whole team. I am very, very happy here.

"Everything fits in the best possible way. My team-mates are fantastic and I am very grateful to be able to play with them at this club."

Reds boss Klopp adds: "The other boys really respect him for all the work he's doing. In [this] moment, every player knows about our plans. He's the first but for sure he won't be the last."

Bobby's form in 2017/18 has brought a number of records and milestones. Along with Mohamed Salah he's broken the record for most European goals scored by a Liverpool player in a single season. He's also recently passed 100 appearances in the Premier League and has now scored 50 goals for the club in all competitions, closing in on the tallies of former greats Peter Beardsley and John Aldridge (of another memorable attacking trio!).

The growing affinity and belief among this squad of players and its supporters has also helped his game reach new levels. "I love to play for Liverpool FC," Bobby continues. "The fans are excellent and fantastic in how they support us all the way.

"They support us throughout the games and the work they do during the match is beautiful. It is fantastic when they chant my name because it gives me more energy to give my very best on the pitch.

"We all know how big Liverpool Football Club is. It is a club with a lot of tradition, so I hope to continue with the whole team going forward, dreaming aloud and aiming very high. Hopefully we will be able to win titles, that's the most important thing for us."

Here's hoping our stellar performer can help add another star to those European banners and flags that have spurred the team to Kiev. "I am a stubborn boy and don't like to lose! I hope to work even harder to achieve good things that are yet to come."




HENDERSON
14
RESPECT

BREATHLESS

Liverpool's awesome Champions League odyssey began in Germany way back in mid-August last year and will end in Ukraine in late May



JOB STARTED

TSG 1899 Hoffenheim 1 Liverpool 2

Tues 15 Aug 2017 Att: 25,568

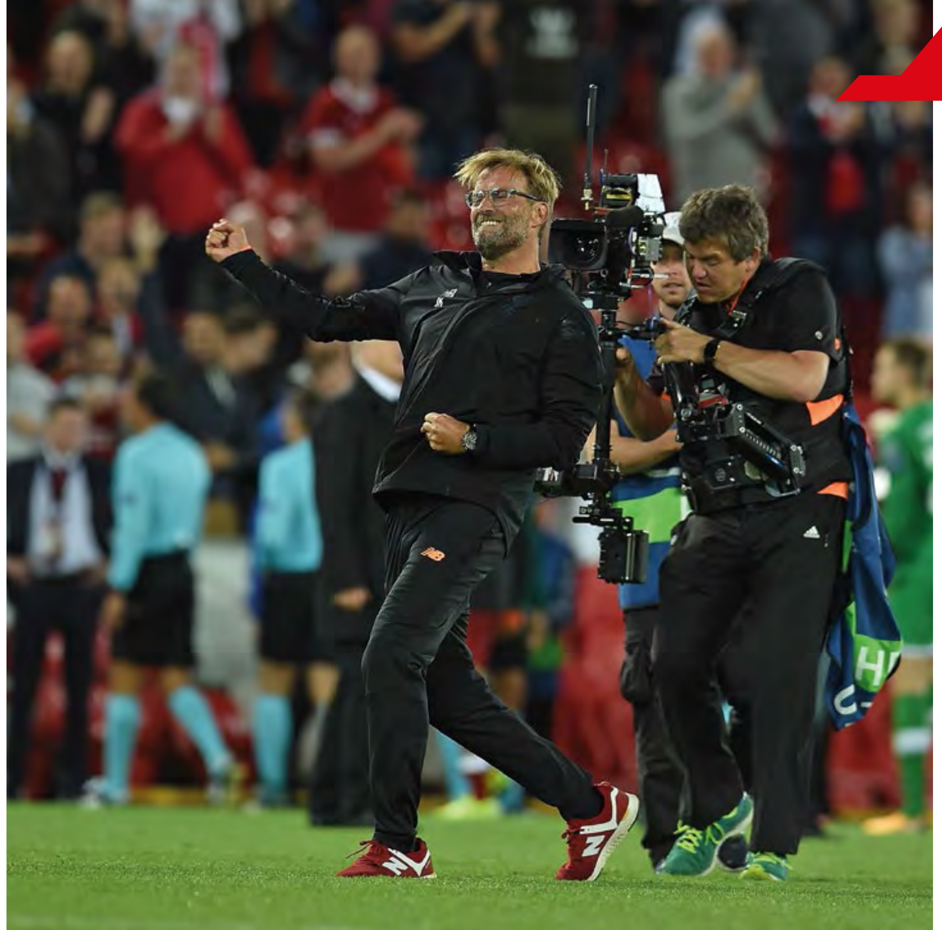
Fifty-three years almost to the day of Liverpool's first-ever game in Europe (on 17 August 1964 when Bill Shankly's boys travelled to KR Reykjavik for a European Cup preliminary-round first leg) comes this qualifying play-off round first leg in Germany.

Young full-back Trent Alexander-Arnold scores a brilliant free-kick on his Champions League debut and goalkeeper Simon Mignolet saves a penalty as the Reds end Hoffenheim's 15-month unbeaten home record.

James Milner's curling shot clips off a opponent's chest *en route* to the top corner to make it 2-0, and although Hoffenheim's Mark Uth pulls one back it's Liverpool who hold the slight advantage.

"If you said before the game we would win, I would take the result," says Jürgen Klopp. "I'm not happy about the goal they scored but I'd rather have this 2-1 than a 1-0."





JOB DONE

Liverpool 4 TSG 1899 Hoffenheim 2

Wed 23 Aug 2017 Att: 53,138

Liverpool virtually wrap up the tie with three goals in the opening 20 minutes at Anfield, with two goals from Emre Can either side of Mohamed Salah's first Anfield strike after Georginio Wijnaldum's effort comes back off the post.

Mark Uth pulls one back for the visitors before Hoffenheim old boy Roberto Firmino restores the three-goal cushion. Sandro Wagner heads a second for Hoffenheim but the Reds are through.

It's a return to the Champions League group stages for the first time since the 2014/15 campaign.

Skipper Jordan Henderson says: "We're in there and we've proved we can play against big teams. We're happy to play against whoever we're drawn against."

MAKING A POINT

Liverpool 2 Sevilla 2

Wed 13 Sept 2017 Att: 52,332

While Maribor hold Spartak to a draw in Slovenia, it's all-square at Anfield between Group E's two favourites.

Roberto Firmino's close-range finish, after a neat one-two between Alberto Moreno and Jordan Henderson (see frame-by-frame below), and Mo Salah's deflected shot overturn Wissam Ben Yedder's early goal for the visitors.

But the Reds are left to rue a penalty-miss by Bobby who strikes the post after Sadio Mane is fouled.

In the second half Sevilla coach Eduardo Berizzo is sent off for throwing the ball away, but with 18 minutes left Joaquin Correa equalises before Joe Gomez is dismissed for a second bookable offence.

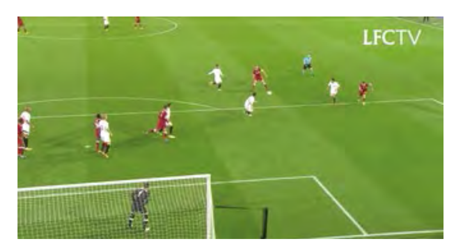
In his matchday programme notes for the subsequent Premier League game with Burnley, manager Jürgen Klopp writes: "I think we showed – as the entire club – that we are absolutely ready again for the Champions League. We were ready on the pitch and off it in terms of how we performed. Okay, so we didn't win and the major frustration – if this is the right word for it – was that the level of our performance deserved a victory.

"[But] Sevilla are one of the most organised sides in European football. They are extremely well-coached, and usually creating really good chances against a side like this is difficult. We produced an unbelievable number of chances on the night. To dominate an opponent of their experience shows we make really good progress.

"I think if we continue in this way and continue to be positive in our approach, rewards will come."



















THE SHOW MOSCOW ON

Spartak Moscow 1 Liverpool 1

Tues 26 Sept 2017 Att: 43,376

It's another draw for Liverpool, this time amid a hostile atmosphere in the Russian capital, despite having 60 per cent of the possession and 13 shots to Spartak's three.

Against the run of play Fernando gets the opening goal for the home side on 23 minutes after Philippe Coutinho concedes a free-kick, and it's a great strike which beats goalkeeper Loris Karius.

But Liverpool's Brazilian midfielder redeems himself with a fine equaliser on the half-hour after a sweet one-two with team-mate Sadio Mane on the edge of the box.

Despite piling on the pressure in the Otkrytie Arena the Reds can't quite force a winner with Mo Salah thwarted by substitute keeper Selikhov and Daniel Sturridge volleying over in injury-time.

The result leaves Liverpool and Spartak joint-second in the table with leaders Sevilla beating Maribor 3-0 at home.

Jürgen Klopp remains confident that the Reds will progress: "We can see a bit of light. We have to stay cool, work hard and we will be all right."





BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL





NK Maribor 0 Liverpool 7

Tues 17 Oct 2017 Att: 12,506

It's a new club-record away European win and a record Reds victory under Jürgen Klopp, also equalling the Champions League's best-ever away win (set by Marseille v MSK Zilina in 2010 and Shakhtar Donetsk v BATE Borisov in 2014).

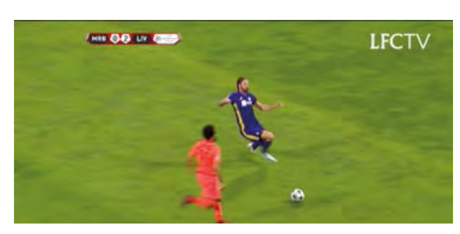
The goals come from Philippe Coutinho, Bobby Firmino (two), Mohamed Salah (two), Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (his first for the Reds) and Trent Alexander-Arnold as the Reds end a run of seven group matches without a win, but the man-of-the-match is arguably James Milner in midfield. Maribor, it should be noted, had previously held both Chelsea and Tottenham to draws on home turf.

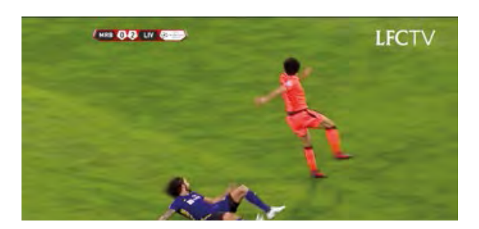
The boss: "It's a very tight group so you need to get results. We set a base with our first two results [but] you can struggle in a game like this...

"We were spot-on from the first second. It looks like Maribor didn't play well, but it was very difficult to play against us today.

"We were very, very concentrated, began very well in the second half and could have scored more, but that's not important."

Just as breathtaking is the score from Moscow: Spartak 5 Sevilla 1. It means that Liverpool enjoy an eleven-goal swing in goal-difference over the Spanish side and assume pole-position in the group.















THREE DELIVERY

Liverpool 3 NK Maribor 0

Wed 1 Nov 2017 Att: 47,957

It was never going to be another landslide against the team from Slovenia, but Anfield was still entertained by a professional performance garnished with second-half Kop-end goals by Mo Salah, Emre Can and Daniel Sturridge, after a first-half James Milner penalty-miss.

After the break Mo flicks home from the impressive Trent Alexander-Arnold's cross to open the scoring; then Emre finishes in style after a one-two with Milner, and Sturridge wraps it up from close-range late on.

Right-back Trent says: "We noticed a lot of our chances [in the first half] were coming from crosses so we decided to continue to do that in the second half.

"It's hard because their aim was to come here for a point and we wanted all three. There are different objectives: we want to score and they are trying to stop us.

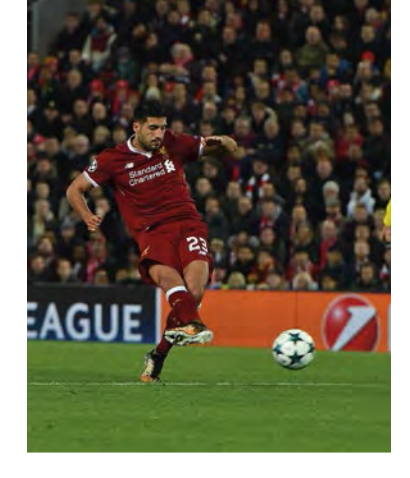
"We have to break it down and we did that in the second half."

Jürgen Klopp's team are now one point clear at top of Group E, ahead of Sevilla who beat Spartak 2-1 at home.

The Reds boss says: "It's a very exciting group because there's not much to choose between the teams. But we're in a good position up until now.

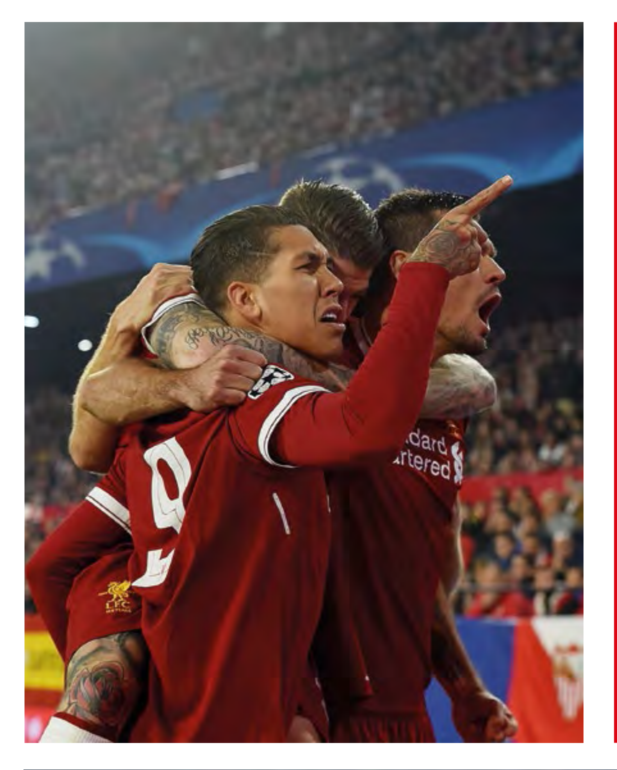
"Tonight was hard work but we deserved the win. It was not perfect from us but we scored three goals, kept a clean-sheet and are top of the group – perfect!"

























SEVILLA THRILLER

Sevilla 3 Liverpool 3

Tues 21 Nov 2017 Att: 39,495

The game is just 88 seconds old when Philippe Coutinho's corner from the right is flicked on by Gini Wijnaldum and there is Bobby Firmino, unmarked, to hook into the back of the Sevilla net.

The home side press for an equaliser but with 22 minutes gone it's the hosts who score again: another Coutinho corner from the right and this time Bobby turns provider with a nod across goal for Mane to connect with a diving header that leaves Sevilla keeper Rico flat-footed. Then 15 minutes before the interval Firmino scores his second of the night after Mane's shot is parried by the goalie.

The Reds are guilty are dropping deeper in the second half, allowing the hosts to claw their way back into the game with two goals from Wissam Ben Yedder (one a penalty) and a dramatic late equaliser from Guido Pizarro.

Jürgen Klopp admits the team "stopped playing football. Three-nil is a wonderful score at half-time but you have to stay in the game and close it out."

Captain Hendo says: "We didn't start well in the second half. We couldn't get the ball up to the front three as we did in the first half."




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FEELS LIKE SEVEN

Liverpool 7 Spartak Moscow 0

Wed 6 Dec 2017 Att: 48,779

In the matchday programme goalkeeper Loris Karius warns: “Everyone probably thinks we’re the huge favourites tonight.

“But in the Champions League I don’t think there are many easy opponents, even when you sometimes look at the name [of the team you’re playing] and think: we should beat them.

“This group is pretty close and it’s tough. But we’ve done our job up to now and we have to finish the group with the right result.”

And then some. Captain-for-the-night Philippe Coutinho duly nets his first Liverpool FC hat-trick as the Reds seal their place in the last 16 in style.

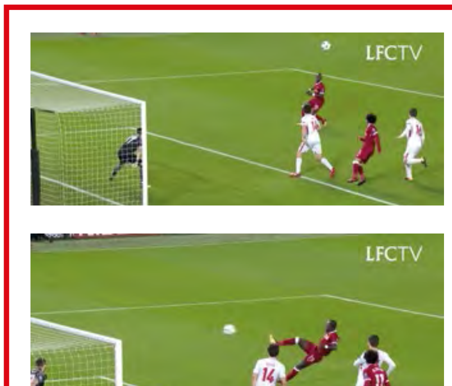
Bobby Firmino, Sadio Mane (with two) and Mo Salah – are also on target to ensure Liverpool finish top of Group E with a first 7-0 home win since 1996.

Three games won, three drawn, and a goal-count of 23-7 on aggregate over the six group games. “A sensational performance,” says Jürgen Klopp.

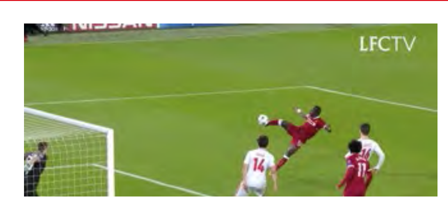
“We were sitting on the bench saying to each other how incredible it is that we’re beating a team as strong as Spartak by seven goals.”

Emre Can adds: “We started quick and got the goals and it was three-nil at half-time. I think a lot of supporters thought about the 3-0 [at half-time] against Sevilla, maybe the same. But we said in the changing-room we just keep going, we press high and we just try to score more goals. We played brilliant in the second half.”























ST VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE

FC Porto 0 Liverpool 5

Wed 14 Feb 2018 Att: 47,718

A ruthlessly clinical Reds performance in the first leg of this round of 16 tie has the rest of Europe sitting up, taking notice then cowering behind the settee.

Sadio Mane becomes only the second Liverpool FC player after Michael Owen to strike a European hat-trick on the road as Porto suffer their record home defeat in European competition. Mo Salah scores his 30th of the season (in 36 games), Bobby Firmino nets his seventh Champions League goal and James Milner makes his seventh assist of the tournament.

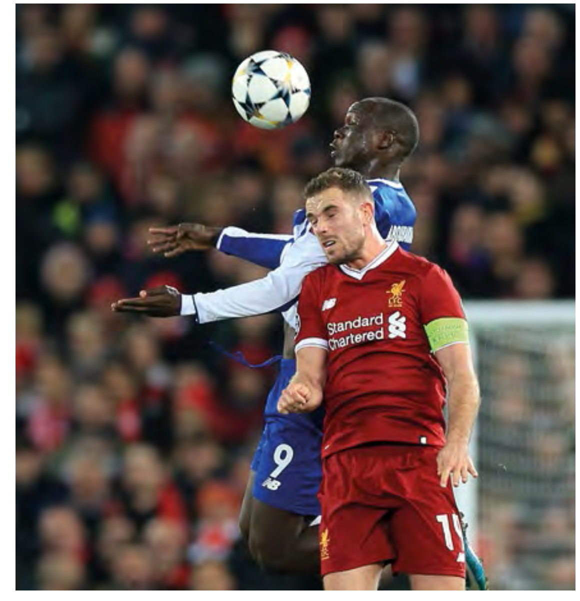
Liverpool's five-nil win also equals the knockout-stage record victory (shared with Bayern Munich and Real Madrid) while Andy Robertson and Danny Ings make their CL debuts.

Jordan Henderson: "As a team it's important we take confidence from a night like that, but for us it has to act as an incentive and a motivation, rather than feel like an achievement. For a start we still haven't qualified for the next round yet.

"I know they'll be people who scoff at that and see it as football-cliche speak, but it's genuinely what was said in the dressing-room after.

"We still have a big job to finish in the home leg... In the grand scheme of things it is a positive result and not a defining one – something to build and improve on."





RITE OF PASSAGE

Liverpool 0 FC Porto 0

Tues 6 March 2018 Att: 48,768

A formality that ends in stalemate, but nevertheless the Reds maintain their focus, concentration and professionalism against a Porto team and their travelling fans desperate to salvage some pride from the tie.

In a changed Reds line-up, there are chances for Sadio Mane, Dejan Lovren and Danny Ings, but Porto keeper Iker Casillas keeps a clean-sheet in what could well be his final Champions League game – no167 in total for the legendary Spanish goalie and three-time European champion (with Real Madrid).

It's also a fifth clean-sheet in their past six Champions League games for Liverpool, who progress to the last eight of the tournament for the first time since season 2008/09.

The boss: "We did the job and that was it tonight. It wasn't the most exciting game but we controlled it, had a few chances, got a clean-sheet and gave some boys some minutes.

"The attitude was outstanding."

Liverpool 3 Manchester City 0

Wed 4 April 2018 Att: 50,685

In a pulsating quarter-final first leg to a non-stop soundtrack of *Allez Allez Allez* the Reds score three times before a show of defensive resilience restricts City to no shots on target.

Mo opens the scoring with his 38th goal of the season, firing in after great work from Bobby.

Then James Milner produces yet another Champions League assist to tee up Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, who smashes home from distance.

Sadio Mane heads home the third before Liverpool show another side to their game with a dogged display as Loris Karius keeps his sixth clean-sheet in nine games in the tournament.

BBC pundit and ex-Reds defender Mark Lawrenson hailed "a signature display by a Jürgen Klopp team – showing no respect to the opposition and giving them no respite.

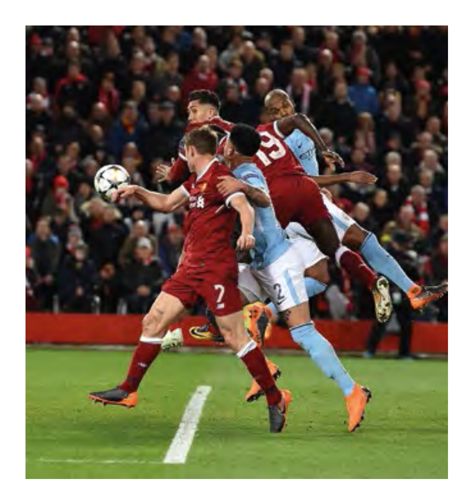
"Liverpool's attitude was basically to tear into City, and there are not many sides who would have been able to cope with that.

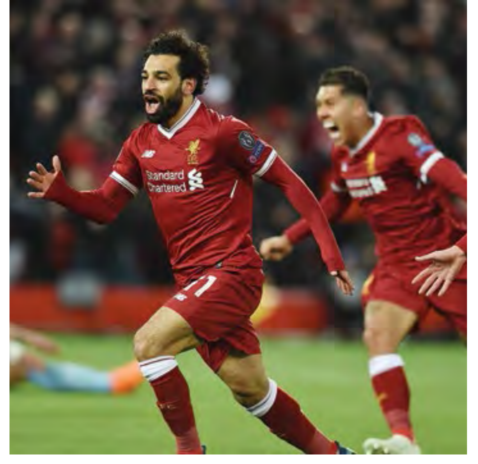
"Every time one of City's players got on the ball it must have felt like they were facing a swarm of bees...

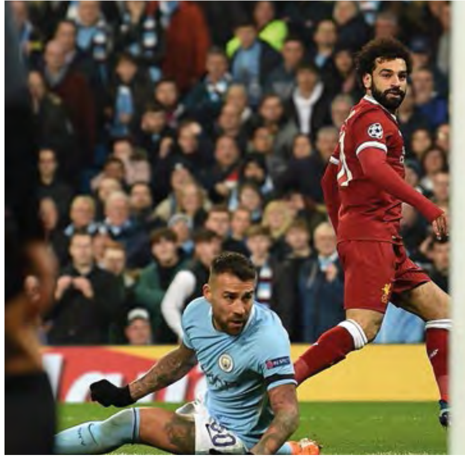
"When people speak about the special European Cup or Champions League nights at Anfield, they do it because the atmosphere is electric.

"If you play for Liverpool on a night like that, it is almost like somebody boosts you and gives you an extra 20 per cent on top of the energy and ability you have got. That is the difference the crowd makes.

"City never really got to grips with it at all. I think it was the occasion more than any tactical mistake by Pep that proved most costly in the end. This was the perfect example, really: watching absolutely brilliant players like De Bruyne, Silva and Gundogan almost self-combusting in front of your eyes shows the effect that Anfield can have."








THROUGH THE WHIRLWIND

Manchester City 1 Liverpool 2

Tues 10 April 2018 Att: 53,461

The Reds reach their first Champions League semi-final in a decade after coming from behind to win at Premier League champions-elect Manchester City and secure an emphatic 5-1 aggregate win.

Gabriel Jesus puts City ahead inside two minutes and the Reds are under intense pressure. But when a City effort is chalked off for offside Pep Guardiola is sent to the stands for his protests.

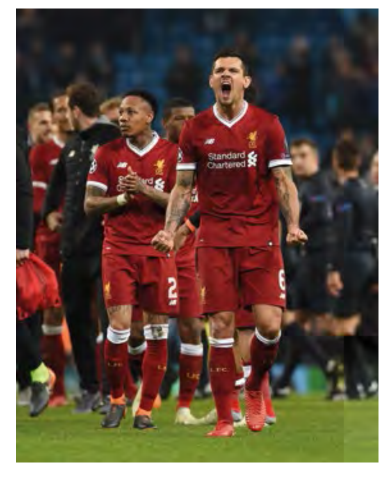
After the break Liverpool score a vital away-goal through Mohamed Salah, then Roberto Firmino's classy finish makes it 2-1. Both players now have nine goals in the tournament this season.

The final whistle sees joyous scenes in front of the away end at the City of Manchester Stadium as the players acknowledge the phenomenal support they've received over both legs of the tie.

Bobby reveals: "In the first half we were really withdrawn [in our own half] but before the second half the boss spoke to us and told us to just play our football and play with a smile on our faces and that's exactly what we did."

Full-back Andy Robertson adds: "In the second half we played more of our natural game and managed to exploit their weaknesses again. It was a great feeling at the end to celebrate in front of the fans with all the players and the staff. We're a group that believe in ourselves. We believe in the ability that we've got on the pitch and we believed that we could beat Manchester City over two legs."

Jürgen Klopp says, simply: "We came through the whirlwind."


Liverpool 5 AS Roma 2

Tues 24 April 2018 Att: 51,236

Liverpool become only the second team to score five goals in a Champions League semi-final with Mohamed Salah (two), Sadio Mane and Roberto Firmino (two) all on target in another stunning display of attacking football.

Late goals from Edin Dzeko, with a cool finish, and Diego Perotti, from the penalty-spot, keep Roma in the tie to set up an exciting second leg. But the Reds have now scored a club-record 44 goals in Europe this season.

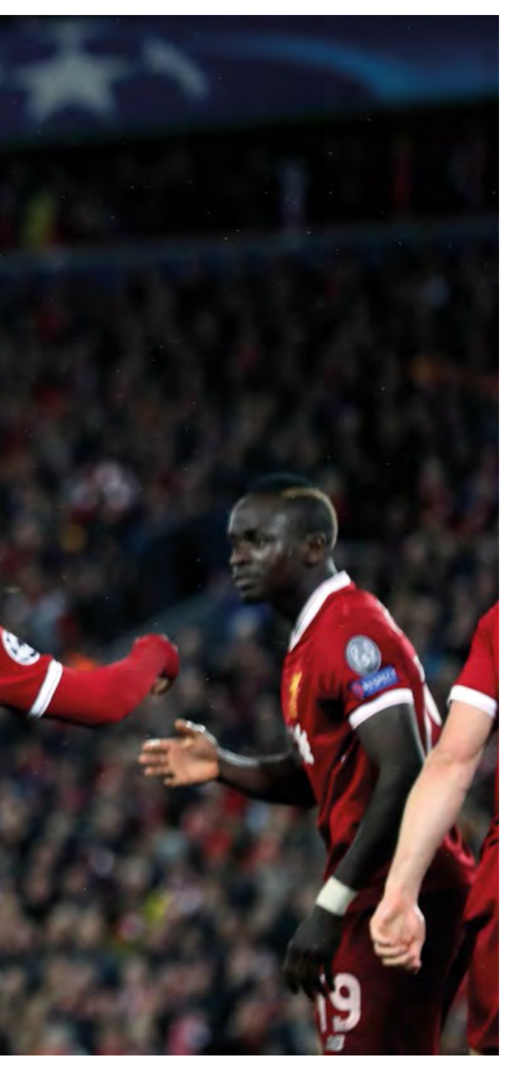
Iron-man midfielder James Milner also sets a new Champions League assists record (nine) but a serious-looking injury to team-mate Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain is the downside of an otherwise fantastic night.

Gini Wijnaldum tweets: "These are magical games at Anfield we will never forget. Let's make sure we won't lose focus like the last 10 minutes of this game so we can take that spot in the final. Thank you for the wonderful evening and the support #weareliverpool #YNWA."

Guardian writer Barney Ronay sums up the evening like this: "Anfield was in one of those periods of constant uproar, jiggled and tickled and dragged into a state of intoxication as Liverpool battered away at Roma without drawing breath. It is no secret this Liverpool team play in surges, moments when the day seems to turn a shade of deep red and when the front three become a whirl of malevolent action.

"But this was something new. Liverpool and Salah did not just accelerate away from Roma, they eviscerated them, almost but not quite killing a semi-final that remains, somehow, in the balance. Liverpool were relentless in those periods, shaking and ragging Roma in their jaws like a terrier with an old leather slipper."

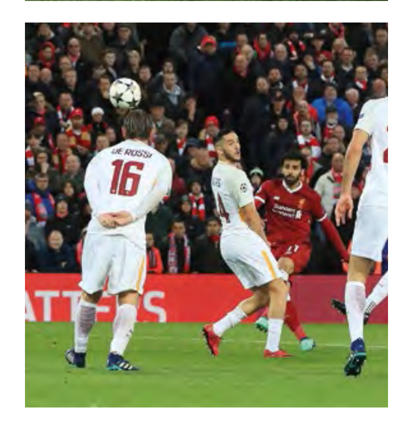








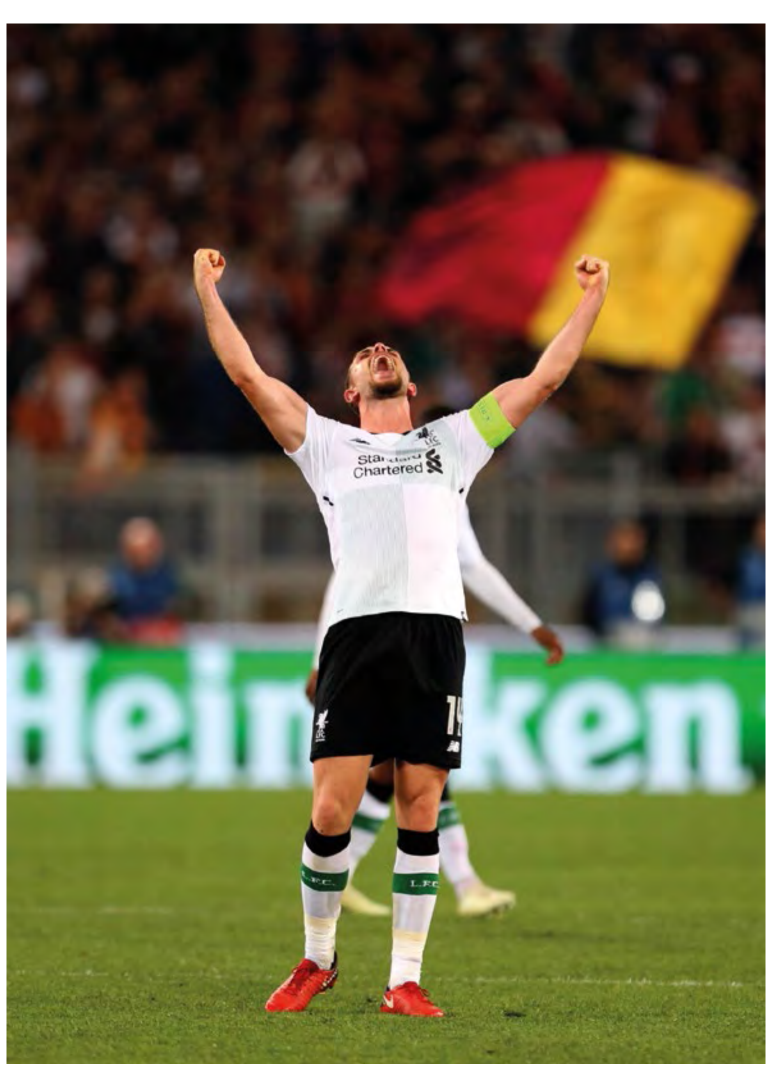
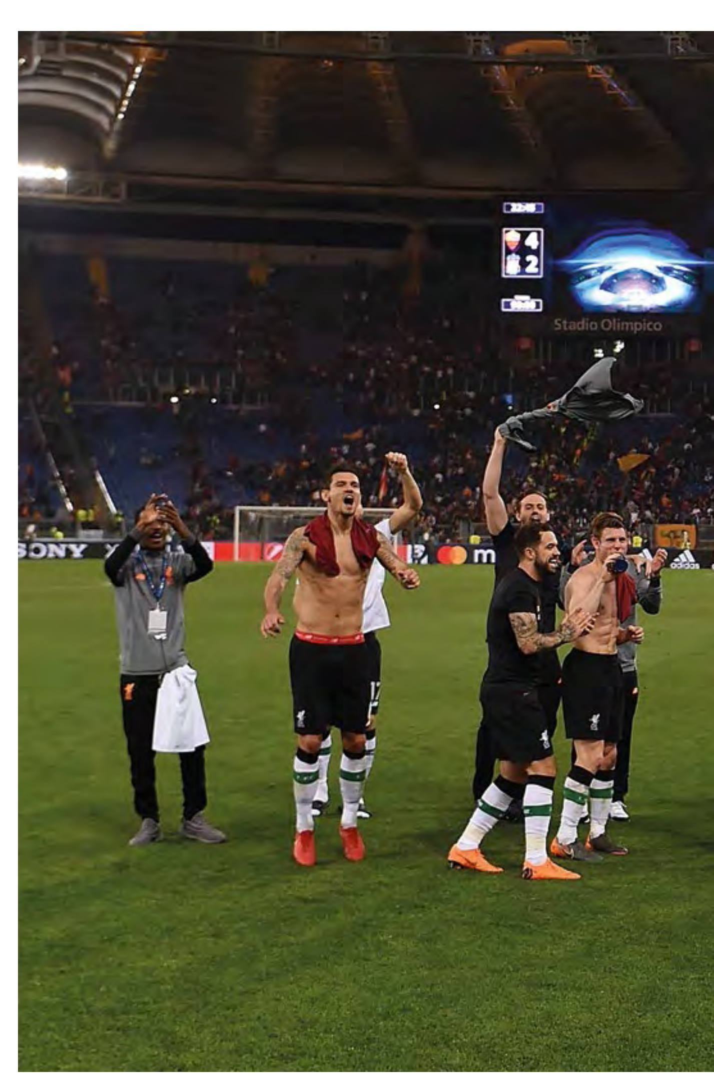


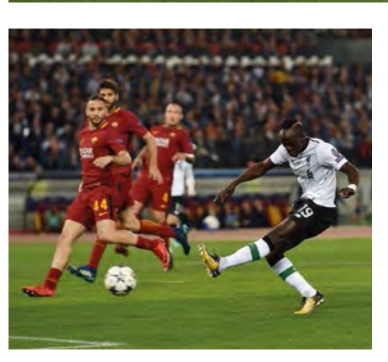




Put through by a perfectly-timed Bobby pass, Mo keeps his cool to chip over advancing goalie Alisson





Stadio Olimpico







GLADIATORS

AS Roma 4 Liverpool 2

Wed 2 May 2018 Att: 61,889

We don't do easy, do we? But then, what would be the point?

In a seething Stadio Olimpico the Reds withstand a late Roma onslaught to book their place in the Kiev final, just, in the second leg of the highest-scoring Champions League semi-final ever.

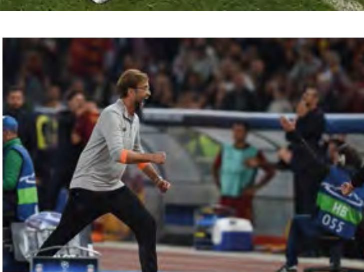
The hosts come at Liverpool from the kick-off, but it's the visitors who take the lead when a sloppy pass from Nainggolan is pounced upon by Roberto Firmino. He plays in Sadio Mane who lashes into the net for his ninth in the competition and the first goal that Roma have conceded at home in the 2017/18 tournament.

It's one-one when an attempted Dejan Lovren clearance ricochets in off James Milner, but then Gini Wijnaldum nods home his first away goal in a Liverpool shirt to restore his team's advantage on the night.

That makes it 20 away-goals for LFC in the Champions League this season, equalling the record for a single campaign in the competition (Real Madrid 2013/14). The Reds also became the third team to score 40 goals within a single Champions League campaign (after Barcelona's 45 in 1999/00) and Real's 41 in 2013/14).

The second half sees Bobby and Sadio go close and Roma close the gap through Edin Dzeko and two Nainggolan goals, the second a late, late penalty. But it's not enough to stop destiny – and an eighth final in Europe's premier competition – calling for Liverpool in the Eternal City.









SEE YOU IN KIEV!

"Seeing all these happy faces is the best thing that football can do. These people follow us all over Europe, come to Anfield, create an exceptional atmosphere, and we know how big the desire is to come back on the winning track. They've had such a big part to play."







SUNDAY
3 JUNE
KO 3PM





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BALE
11

REAL DEAL



How about our opponents then? This means four Champions League finals in five years for 12-time winners Real Madrid

There is little need to delve into the intricacies of Real Madrid's run to the 2017/18 UEFA Champions League final. Simply see last year. And the year before. And two years before that.

Great players, a largely settled group with a winning mentality and no fear travelling to European football's biggest names and most intimidating venues has helped the competition's most successful ever side reach the latter stages time and again in recent seasons. Not that it's always done so convincingly, but their experience is almost like an away-goal – it can sometimes count as 'double'.

While not at their best domestically this term, Madrid's path to the knockout stage of the Champions League was relatively comfortable, aside from defeat to Tottenham Hotspur at Wembley.

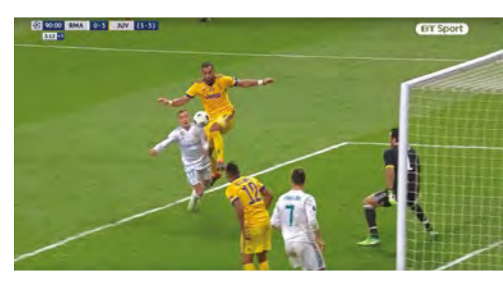
Seventeen goals in six group matches brought victories over APOEL (3-0 and 0-6) and Borussia Dortmund (1-3 and 3-2), but just one point from their meetings with Spurs (1-1 and 1-3) would mean settling for a runners-up spot and arguably what could end up being the toughest-possible route to the final in Kiev.

But Paris St-Germain, Real's last 16 opponents, would continue to flatter to deceive come post-Christmas European fixtures, and wins home (3-1) and away (1-2) set up a quarter-final tie with Juventus in a round of comebacks and near-comebacks.

That impressive 3-0 win in Turin's first leg looked to have sealed a last-four place for the eighth season in a row. But the Italian giants had other ideas and impressively tied the aggregate scores only for 15-goal Cristiano Ronaldo to slot home an ice-cool penalty in the seventh minute of injury-time. As you do.

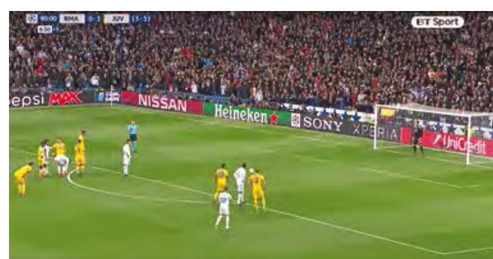
Another impressive but under-the-cosh away win at German giants Bayern Munich in the semi-final's first leg (1-2) meant the 2-2 draw at the Bernabeu back in Madrid was enough to keep the bid for no13 on track in Kiev. Only near-comebacks this time.

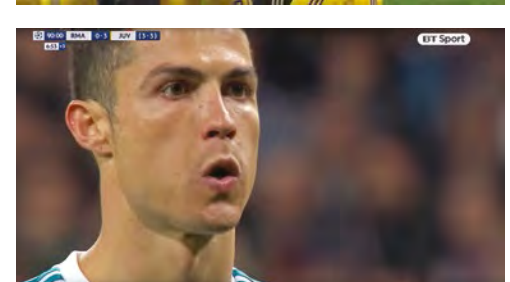
The last European Cup final that Madrid lost, though? A certain 1981 Paris showpiece...













REAL'S ROUTE

13 Sep	**Real Madrid 3** **APOEL 0**
26 Sep	**Borussia Dortmund 1** **Real Madrid 3**
17 Oct	**Real Madrid 1** **Tottenham Hotspur 1**
1 Nov	**Tottenham Hotspur 3** **Real Madrid 1**
21 Nov	**APOEL 0** **Real Madrid 6**
6 Dec	**Real Madrid 3** **Borussia Dortmund 2**
14 Feb	**Real Madrid 3** **Paris St-Germain 1**
6 Mar	**Paris St-Germain 1** **Real Madrid 2**
3 Apr	**Juventus 0** **Real Madrid 3**
11 Apr	**Real Madrid 1** **Juventus 3**
25 Apr	**Bayern Munich 1** **Real Madrid 2**
1 May	**Real Madrid 2** **Bayern Munich 2**

Top scorers for Real:
Ronaldo 15
Benzema 4
Marcelo 3

Words: Michael McGuinness



ALL WE'RE FOCUSED ON IS WINNING THAT TROPHY

Part of Trent Alexander-Arnold can't believe he's just said that about the Champions League – but he's deadly serious

Sat on a red sofa in a back office at Melwood, Trent Alexander-Arnold scans down a list of every Liverpool player to have appeared for the club in a European Cup final and their ages at the time. The Scouse teenager, who only turns 20 in October later this year, soon spots that David Fairclough (1978) and Jim Beglin (1985) are the joint-youngest at the age of 21…

TRENT: Twenty-one? That's the youngest?

LFC MAG: There hasn't even been a 20-year-old, never mind a teenager…

TRENT: Jeez! Is this just the starters?

LFC MAG: No, the starters and the subs that came on. Even Steve Nicol was 22 when he came on in 1984 so you could be the first teenager to play for LFC in a European Cup final…

TRENT: I know, yeah! Obviously it's an exciting thought because growing up it is a dream to play – well, hopefully play – in a Champions League final. You dream of getting that chance and as a team we've got there. It's a huge game so hopefully the manager will trust me to go out there and play and hopefully we can win the European Cup for Liverpool.

LFC MAG: As a Liverpool supporter how does it feel seeing the names on this list?

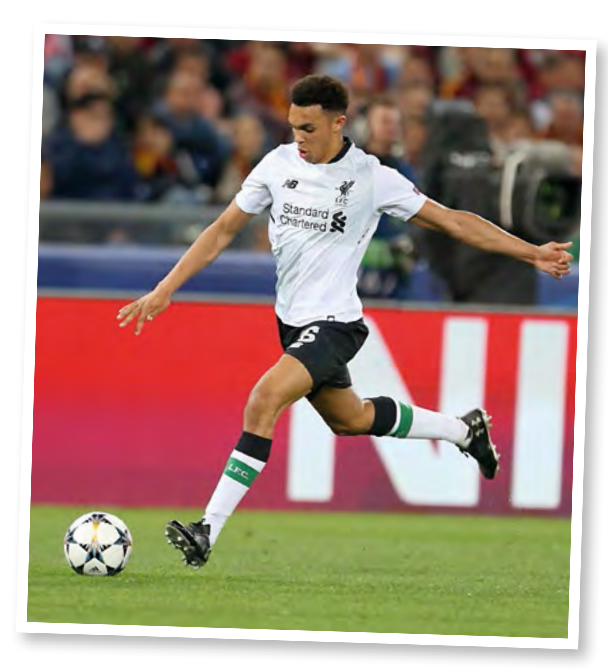
TRENT: There are huge names on it. Liverpool legends like Phil Thompson, Kenny Dalglish, Sammy Lee, Jamie Carragher, Steven Gerrard, Stevie Heighway – all names that mean a lot to people at Liverpool. To be in and around those names would be unbelievable for me. There have been local players in most of those teams and the two I remember coming through to win it are Gerrard and Carragher. I relate to them more than the players from the 1970s and 80s, when I wasn't born, and seeing them win it gives me an example to follow.

LFC MAG: Are you proof that if you're good enough you're old enough in the eyes of Jürgen Klopp?

TRENT: Definitely. He has shown since the first day he came through the doors that the young players will get their chances. It's all about being patient and taking the opportunity when you get it. Young players here have the belief they will get a chance if they work hard. That's how I felt and he's given me the opportunities to play in big games and make my dreams come true, so I can only thank him for that.

LFC MAG: Ben Woodburn was on the bench away to Man City and Roma while Curtis Jones, Rafa Camacho and Conor Masterson have also been unused subs…

TRENT: Throughout most of the season those lads were based at the Academy and only came up to Melwood very rarely, but all of a sudden they're travelling with the team to the second leg of a Champions League semi-final in Rome. It shows that it can happen. To see them in Rome with the rest of the team should give everyone at the Academy a lot of motivation.



LFC MAG: Has it boosted your confidence to be in the team ahead of Nathaniel Clyne even though he's a more established right-back and now back from injury?

TRENT: Right-back is probably one of the most over-crowded positions that we have with myself, Joe Gomez

This is what it means

Celebrating in Rome with the gaffer

and Clyney. It's tough but all three of us love the competition. Obviously when you're sat on the bench you want to be out there playing, but when the manager puts his trust in you to go and perform it gives you the motivation to do well, knowing he could've chosen someone else. The competition for places also helps us in training as we've got to fight for our place every day because usually only one of the three of myself, Joe and Clyney will play.

LFC MAG: You got our Champions League campaign off to the perfect start by scoring your first goal for the club away to Hoffenheim in the qualifier. How big a moment was that for you?

TRENT: *[puffs out cheeks]* It was just an unbelievable night. I hadn't really played too many night fixtures for the first-team at that stage. I'd never played in Europe and hadn't experienced a European night, kicked a Champions League ball or heard the Champions League anthem. The way the camera comes across in front of you when we're lining up is weird. You see it on the telly when a few players give a cheeky wink to the cameras and when I was growing up I'd mess around with my mates doing the same! To then be stood there in Hoffenheim with the camera going past in front of me before playing in a big European game then scoring the opening goal was a dream-come-true.

LFC MAG: Nine months on and you've made eleven appearances in Europe including both legs of the Champions League quarter-final and semi-final...

TRENT: I know, I know, but I think something that helped us was the way we had to qualify for it. We went into the start of the season knowing we had to fight for it and got a tough draw – Hoffenheim was one of the hardest draws we could've got. We showed over those two games we meant business in the Champions League and we had a good group stage. We had to win the last game against Spartak Moscow to go through and from there we've taken every game in our stride and pushed on until we got to Rome.

LFC MAG: How tough was the semi-final second leg over there?

TRENT: We went into the game with a good advantage but we knew it wasn't finished. It showed with the end-result: 4-2 on the night and 7-6 on aggregate. You don't really see scores like that in the Champions League semi-final too often! But then that's the way we've done it this year

BEFORE HOFFENHEIM I'D NEVER PLAYED IN EUROPE OR HEARD THAT ANTHEM

– it's a Liverpool thing to always do it the hard way, but it makes things that bit better when you get through like that. Hopefully all the Liverpool fans feel like they've been on the same journey as us.

LFC MAG: What was it like being on the pitch during the amazing Anfield atmospheres against Man City and Roma?

TRENT: Anfield always has a good atmosphere, no matter who we're playing, but in those two knockout fixtures when we needed the atmosphere to be good, it was. That helped us so much and I don't think the fans really know how much the atmosphere does for the players. They obviously believe they can





Getting used to this particular make of football

give us a little bit more – but that support gives us much, much more. It intimidates the opposition and makes it harder for them, which makes it easier for us. It also gives us that bit more energy, an extra yard to go and win the ball or a header. When you win a tackle and hear it celebrated like a goal...it's just a different level.

LFC MAG: How big a difference can the travelling Kop make in Kiev?

TRENT: There will be loads of Liverpool fans out there, in and around the city and at the match, and it will be important to go there and feel like we're still at home. It's not down to two legs any more, it's a one-off final and the best team will win on the day. If we've got all those Liverpool supporters behind us then we've got a great chance.

LFC MAG: Ronaldo, Bale, Benzema, Modric, Isco...Real Madrid have got quite a team...

TRENT: They're not only a good team but like Liverpool they've got a massive history in the European Cup and are one of the two clubs that have won it more than us. We haven't been in the tournament for a few years and not made the final since 2007 but that means the players are really up for it. We want to go to Kiev and win. We've not got this far to just roll over. We'll be fighting to win and we'll hopefully lift the Champions League *[laughs in disbelief at what he's saying]*.

LFC MAG: It must feel mad to be saying that at the age of 19?

TRENT: It sounds crazy to be saying that! But that's the goal and we're potentially 90 minutes away from achieving it.

LFC MAG: If that sounds crazy then how about this: Phil Neal, right-back, Rome 1977. Alan Kennedy, left-back, Paris 1981. Phil Neal, right-back, Rome 1984. Vladimir Smicer, right wing-back, Istanbul 2005. Liverpool full-backs have a habit of scoring in European Cup finals...

TRENT: *[bursts into laughter]* I think that every kid dreams of scoring in a Champions League final but we're up against world-class opponents in Real Madrid who have got quality across the park. If I find myself in a position then hopefully I'll take my chance.

LFC MAG: If Liverpool do win in Kiev how do you think it will compare to our five previous European Cup wins?

TRENT: I don't know, to be honest, because we've done it differently this year. We've blown teams away with our attacking football and if you look back, a lot of the other Liverpool teams didn't really do that. We've scored a lot of goals and kept a lot of clean-sheets, so it's been an unbelievable campaign and all we're focused on now is trying to win Liverpool's sixth European Cup. To achieve that would be massive for the club.

Liverpool's EC/CL final player ages

1977 v Borussia MG: Ray Clemence 28, Phil Neal 26, Joey Jones 22, Tommy Smith 32, Ray Kennedy 25, Emlyn Hughes 29, Kevin Keegan 26, Jimmy Case 23, Steve Heighway 29, Ian Callaghan 35, Terry McDermott 25.

1978 v Bruges: Ray Clemence 29, Phil Neal 27, Phil Thompson 24, Alan Hansen 22, Ray Kennedy 26, Emlyn Hughes 30, Kenny Dalglish 27, Jimmy Case 23, David Fairclough 21, Terry McDermott 26, Graeme Souness 24, Steve Heighway 30.

1981 v Real Madrid: Ray Clemence 32, Phil Neal 30, Alan Kennedy 26, Phil Thompson 27, Ray Kennedy 29, Alan Hansen 25, Kenny Dalglish 30, Sammy Lee 22, David Johnson 29, Terry McDermott 29, Graeme Souness 28, Jimmy Case 27.

1984 v AS Roma: Bruce Grobbelaar 26, Phil Neal 33, Alan Kennedy 29, Mark Lawrenson 27, Ronnie Whelan 22, Alan Hansen 28, Kenny Dalglish 33, Sammy Lee 25, Ian Rush 22, Craig Johnson 23, Graeme Souness 31, Steve Nicol 22, Michael Robinson 25.

1985 v Juventus: Bruce Grobbelaar 27, Phil Neal 34, Jim Beglin 21, Mark Lawrenson 28, Steve Nicol 23, Alan Hansen 29, Kenny Dalglish 34, Ronnie Whelan 23, Ian Rush 23, Paul Walsh 22, John Wark 27, Gary Gillespie 24, Craig Johnston 24.



2005 v AC Milan: Jerzy Dudek 32, Steve Finnan 29, Djimi Traore 25, Sami Hyypia 31, Jamie Carragher 27, Xabi Alonso 23, Steven Gerrard 24, John Arne Riise 24, Luis Garcia 26, Harry Kewell 26, Milan Baros 23, Vladimir Smicer 32, Didi Hamann 31, Djibril Cisse 23.

2007 v AC Milan: Pepe Reina 24, Steve Finnan 31, John Arne Riise 26, Daniel Agger 22, Jamie Carragher 29, Javier Mascherano 22, Xabi Alonso 25, Bolo Zenden 30, Jermaine Pennant 24, Steven Gerrard 26, Dirk Kuyt 26, Harry Kewell 28, Peter Crouch 26, Alvaro Arbeloa 24.



HOFFENHEIM AWAY

It all started with the gaffer and Hendo in Hoffenheim in mid-August last year

QUESTION TIME

Each Champions League fixture has a pre-match press-conference starring the manager and a first-team player...

HOFFENHEIM HOME

Joel Matip wins today's staring contest!

SEVILLA HOME

Joe Gomez focused on the first group game at Anfield



The boss and Loris have an Elvis face-off!



Dejan's enjoying it (left) but someone please ask JK an interesting question!

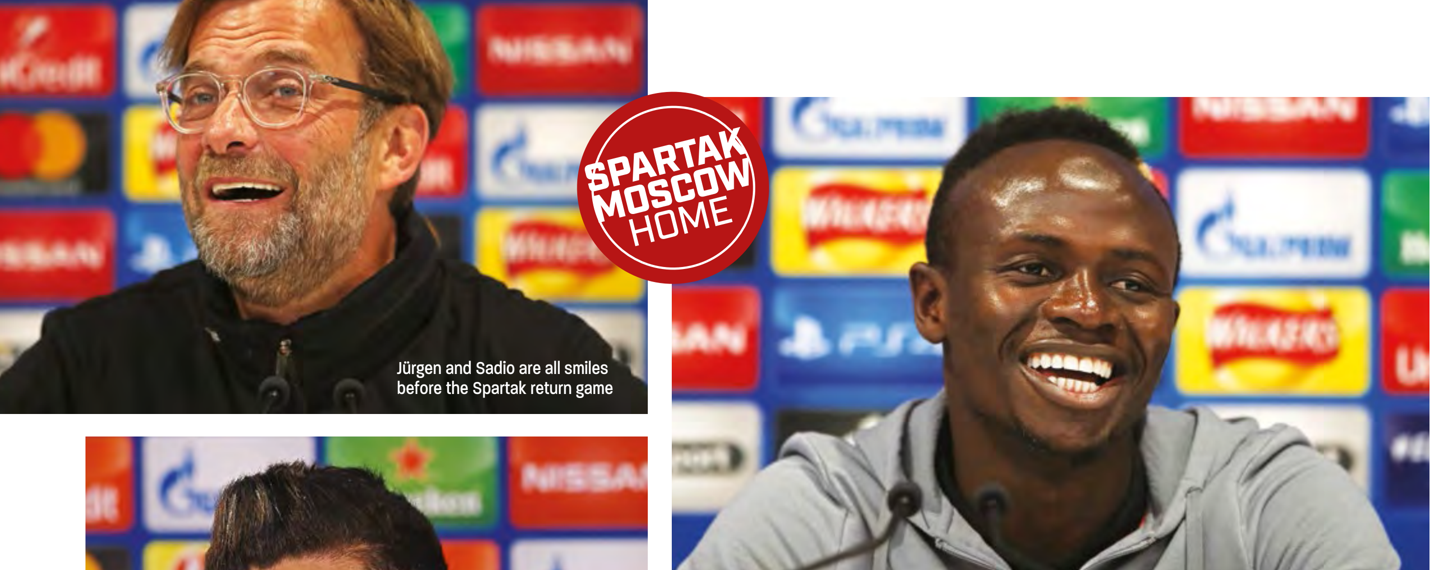


James Milner (above) remembers he's got a visit to the dentist



Six out of 10 for Raggy's Zoolander pose!

SPARTAK MOSCOW HOME



Jürgen and Sadio are all smiles before the Spartak return game

FC PORTO AWAY



Bobby said Klopp's Reds would make Porto suffer in the first leg – he wasn't kidding

FC PORTO HOME



Milly's tight-lipped before the Porto return match

MANCHESTER CITY HOME



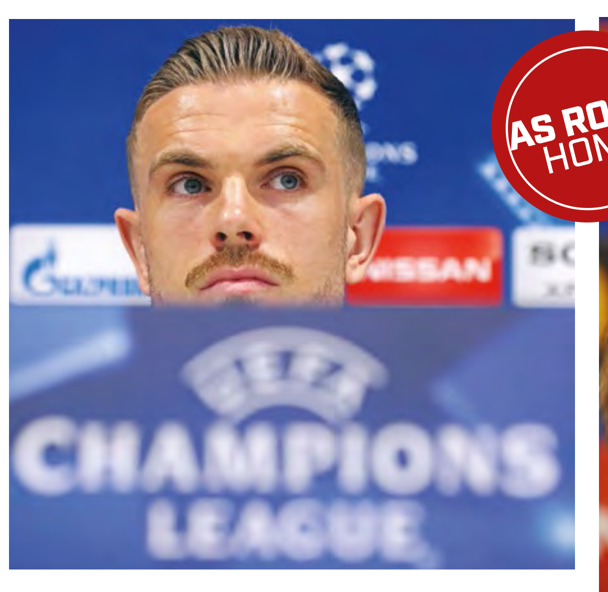
Andy Robertson joined the gaffer before the big Anfield clash with City


Liver Birds are go but Virgil plays it cool

MANCHESTER CITY AWAY



AS ROMA HOME




Jordan's intense before Roma at Anfield but the boss still smiles



AS ROMA AWAY

Gini on duty – you're gonna score later young man!

Lov ACTUALLY

Reds centre-back Dejan Lovren talks us through the passion of the fans and the prospect of playing Real Madrid on 26 May

Reaching the final of the UEFA Champions League is a fantastic achievement for the club and also personally. We have grown as the competition has gone on and we know what we need to do to do well in this tournament. Apart from the World Cup final, this is the biggest game you can play in and we are all really looking forward to it. It is something that everyone wants.

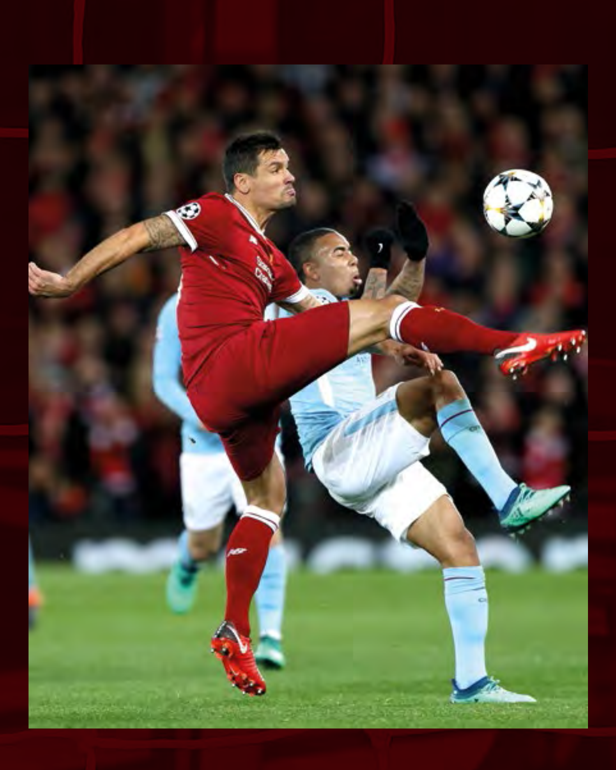
I was dreaming of playing in the final and winning the tournament since I was a boy. Now we have the opportunity. We need to show our character again, show our skills and show the world that we can do it.

It is almost fate to meet Real Madrid in the final. This is my fourth season playing in the Champions League and I have met Real Madrid each time, twice when I was at Lyon and also in my first season with Liverpool. My time in France was a learning process in the tournament. We played against Real Madrid but also against other big teams at that moment. I would say that was the school for me and now I am growing and also getting the experience in my legs of playing in the Champions League.

I know it will be quite tough against Real Madrid but I am confident and the team is confident. We have shown everyone that we can compete against the big teams.

Yes, Real Madrid are one of the best teams at the moment with some of the best players in the world. They have won the last two Champions League titles and that says a lot.

They have a big history behind them and a lot of experience and obviously they are used to winning big trophies including this one, which they have won 12 times.




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OUR FANS HAVE BEEN MAGNIFICENT IN EUROPE THIS SEASON, HOME AND AWAY, IT MEANS SO MUCH TO HEAR THEM RIGHT BEHIND US IN DIFFERENT STADIUMS
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Celebrating with Loris Karius after the Man City tie

We respect them but we are not afraid. We have showed to everyone that we are strong too: we can beat Porto away 5-0, we can beat City home and away, we can beat Roma 5-2 at home and so we know that we can also beat Real Madrid.

We are a team who believes in ourselves and we believe that we can achieve even better things in the future.

We are a completely different team to the Liverpool that competed in the Champions League during 2014/15.

I can say this because I was in that team and I am also in this one. From the team that started the group game against Real Madrid at Anfield in 2014 to the one that played in Rome, there is only myself and Hendo. We are a much, much better team than at that moment and we are much more confident that we can achieve something.

It was not without reason that we went out at the group stage in 2014 and it is not without reason that we are in the final in this moment. When Jürgen came in we reached the final of the Europa League which was a good achievement as he had only been at the club a few months and he didn't have so much time to adapt. Now he has changed a lot of players, we have more experience and we are more clever. Hopefully we will be clever enough to win the final.

It has been a long campaign, starting back in August against Hoffenheim.

To be honest we had to play against one of the best teams in the qualifier. They were quite intensive games, especially the first one there where we won 2-1. It wasn't the perfect result but then we showed our qualities in the second leg. I would say that we went up a gear and destroyed them in the first half at Anfield. It was an important win for us and from that moment on everything went more or less how we wanted.

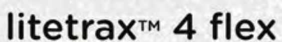
In the group stages we showed that we were so powerful but then in some moments, usually in the last 15 or 20 minutes, we lost the meaning of our football, perhaps due to concentration or tiredness. In the away game at Sevilla, we were 3-0 up but then we dropped and let them back in. I think we learned from that moment on.

In the first knockout game we went to Porto, who also had a very strong home record, and we showed our qualities. Everyone produced a fantastic performance with the defensive job and, of course, we scored a lot of goals too. Then we









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realised that we need to do this every time in the Champions League.

The Champions League is different to the Premier League and, like the manager says, you need to defend for your lives, and we've been doing that when we've had to.

I think that was a key moment for us when we really thought we could achieve a lot. We believe that we can score against every team, no matter who, and that we can also defend how we want, too. It is a learning process but with this team we just need to play our football.

The atmosphere at Anfield for the games against Manchester City and Roma was brilliant.

We know that our fans will be absolutely amazing but as an opponent you don't know what to expect. The question maybe should be for those other players: how is it going to be?

IN THE FINAL WE WANT TO SHOW THE WORLD OUR CHARACTER AND WHAT WE CAN DO

Our fans have been incredible away from home, too. Man City away was good but we are used to that because we also play there in the Premier League but I can say the best atmosphere was definitely in Rome. It was something that was really enjoyable for every player, to feel that such a big mass of people were behind the team. Even when we were losing at the end they were still behind us, it was brilliant and just fantastic to play in.

When we scored, you could just hear Liverpool fans and that was good for us – just to hear them because the rest of the people in the stadium were quiet because of the goals.

It was fantastic with 5,000 people coming to support us. We managed to get through and we didn't pick up any injuries – but the most important thing was reaching the final for the fans.

I have been in touch with my Croatian international team-mates Luka Modric and Mateo Kovacic who play for Real Madrid.

Of course it's quite an amazing achievement for such a small country of not even four million people

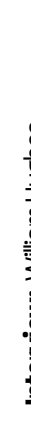
> **WE SEE THE TROPHY AT MELWOOD EVERY DAY AND WE WANT TO WIN IT AGAIN**

that almost every year we have a Croatian international player who can win the final. It's great for us and for the nation. I'm sure the whole nation will be tuning in for the final.

I would say more people will be on my side as I haven't won it before and both these guys have won it the last few times! The country is proud of us and in the end we will see who will win it.

A week after the Champions League final, I am hoping to play for Croatia at Anfield in a friendly against Brazil.

I hope that I can come back with the trophy. I am sure that we will have our supporters from Croatia at that moment but also some Liverpool fans







who will come to support me and Bobby Firmino. I'm sure it would be a fantastic feeling for us to show the trophy off to those fans.

We walk past the Champions League trophy at Melwood every day.

It was also at Anfield before the first leg against Roma. We saw it and just looked at it for a second and that was already enough. You know what you want and what you need to do to get to the final and, as I say, this is something that every player dreams of. God willing, we will be able to lift that trophy in the air.

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You'll Never Walk Alone



We always win in Rome!



Let's make it six!

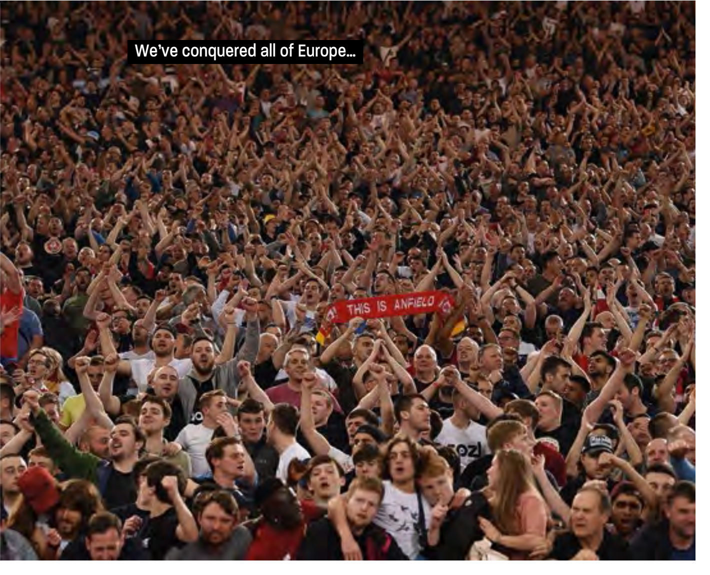


Bob with his three Euro Cups!





Wall of noise



We've conquered all of Europe…



Barcelona, Real Madrid…

Hoffenheim's fans in full voice at Anfield



Maribor added a splash of purple!



Porto supporters did themselves proud



An exclusive chapter from the inspirational new book by Andy Grant, former Royal marine, world-record holder, Bootle lad and Liverpool fan

WHEN ANDY MET CARRA

The title of Andy Grant's brilliant new book is *You'll Never Walk*, alluding to the *YNWA* tattoo he partially lost when his right leg was amputated in November 2010. He's since won gold – twice – at the Invictus Games and has broken the 10,000m world-record for below-the-knee amputees (37 mins 17 secs), cheered on by Jamie Carragher at Wavertree Athletics Centre.

Andy was a serving Royal Marine when he was injured by an IED in Afghanistan back in February 2009. Around eight weeks later, at his family home in Bootle, he was visited by Liverpool defender Carra, with the Reds locked in a Premier League title race at the time with Manchester United.

Here's how Andy remembers the encounter in the chapter entitled *Bootle Boys*...

The day before Jamie Carragher walked into my living room to be greeted by the sight of me on the couch in a pair of boxies, me and my dad decided to go for a pint.

There was a four o'clock kick-off on Sky Sports and so we opted for the Linacre pub on Linacre Lane which was my old man's favourite. It was his way of trying to reintroduce a little bit of normality into my life. Only there was nothing normal about him wheeling me in through the doorway and towards the bar.

It felt like one of those films when the music stops and there's an old-fashioned vinyl scratch and all eyes turn to face you, pints and wine-glasses suspended in mid-air. Or at least that's the way it felt to me. I wanted the world to swallow me up.

All the fretting about losing my sense of prowess that I'd done in a hospital bed was now becoming a reality...


Andy training at Crosby Beach

The embarrassment washed over me like a tidal wave. Little prickles of shame picked at my cheeks.

People couldn't help but look at me. I spotted them before they had time to look away. It was the confusion of seeing a young lad in a wheelchair. They were experiencing that sinking feeling you get when you see someone in their prime, or perhaps even younger, unable to help themselves – being ferried about by a contraption. It will always draw your eyes because it's unnatural.

The fact that I had a huge gash on my face and the blanket draped over me extended outwards along the length of the cage it was concealing, only drew more attention; more stares.

My dad had his own spec tucked away in the corner of the pub. He loved to stand at the bar, like fellas of a certain generation do.

They're blokes who have that innate revulsion when faced with the constrictions imposed by a table and four chairs. The type of fella who can't be arsed one bit with 'going for a meal'. His spec was like a little alcove where he could prop himself up with his left elbow and hold a bevvy in his right hand and survey the whole room with ease.

In a military sense, he had the drop on everyone. And yet on that particular Sunday he wheeled me past his spot and we rattled onwards over sticky burgundy carpet towards a free table. As we passed the bar an old bloke hobbled forwards to swipe a chair out of my path and I looked up at him from my seat and thanked him. Inside I wanted to cry...

But one exchange in the pub that day would lead to something good. Because as we zig-zagged awkwardly into the place, my dad meekly letting on to people he knew me cowering in my chair, Jamie Carragher's in-laws waved from a table.

I'd said 'hello' to them half-heartedly, because I didn't know them as well as my dad. And somewhere in the hours between us leaving The Linacre, me drifting off on the couch in front of the telly and waking up in my own bed on Monday morning, a deal had been struck for Carra to come and see me...

My dad ushered Carra towards the couch opposite to where I lay and plonked himself on the couch next to him. *Deal or No Deal* hummed quietly in the background. A lady from Stoke covered her face. Noel Edmonds tried in vain to rally the troops.

I pulled cushions tight around me so Carra couldn't catch a glimpse of my bright red boxies. Two months after the blast, I was still a sight for sore eyes. The cage was suspended in plain sight as I had no chance to cover it. My left foot was covered in plasters and ballooned like a tree-trunk.

Fixed into the ankle was the first of the four rings on the Ilizarov cage, with seven steel pins sticking into the skin around the joint. Pus gathered around the spot where the pins pricked the foot. From my ankle upwards there was an open wound about the size and shape of a rasher of bacon and a similar meaty colour.

Just above that wound sat the second ring surrounded by scrapes and gashed right the way up the shin bone. Just below my knee the two final rings were held in place close to each other.

The whole leg was placed on a cushion to keep the blood flowing. Above my knee a chunk the size of an A5 piece of paper was missing from my thigh and Carra could see right through to the tendons and the tissue, throbbing and pulsing in broad daylight.

"****ing hell," I spluttered, my eyes locked onto Carra as he lowered himself into the seat and smiled fully at me in the face. "Yer okay?" he repeated, with that familiar loud and authoritative Scouse tone. "Did you not know I was coming?"

When I watched him on the television or at Anfield, he seemed bigger and broader in bright red, arms out-stretched and vocal chords working overtime. In his neat navy blue polo and smart jeans that fit about as snugly as any Scouser could wish for, he gave off the appearance of a normal lad who took pride in his gear. And yet his presence was overpowering.

It was like there was a force-field around him. He might not have resembled the colossus that bullied six-foot-five centre-forwards for a living, but his aura was breath-taking. "****," I said again, causing him to cackle as he shifted and adjusted himself in the seat.

Like two Scouse lads we asked one another if we were 'okay' a further six times before getting down to something resembling a conversation. Carra seized the initiative, rubbing his hands together

like he had orders to carry out.

"So, how did yer do that then?" he enquired. His eyes were bright and blazing and he trained them on mine, careful not to let them drift down and clock the monstrous cage that sat between us on the couch. Jamie Carragher wanted to know about me, I realised after a split-second of staring at the figure in front of me fidgeting on the sofa.

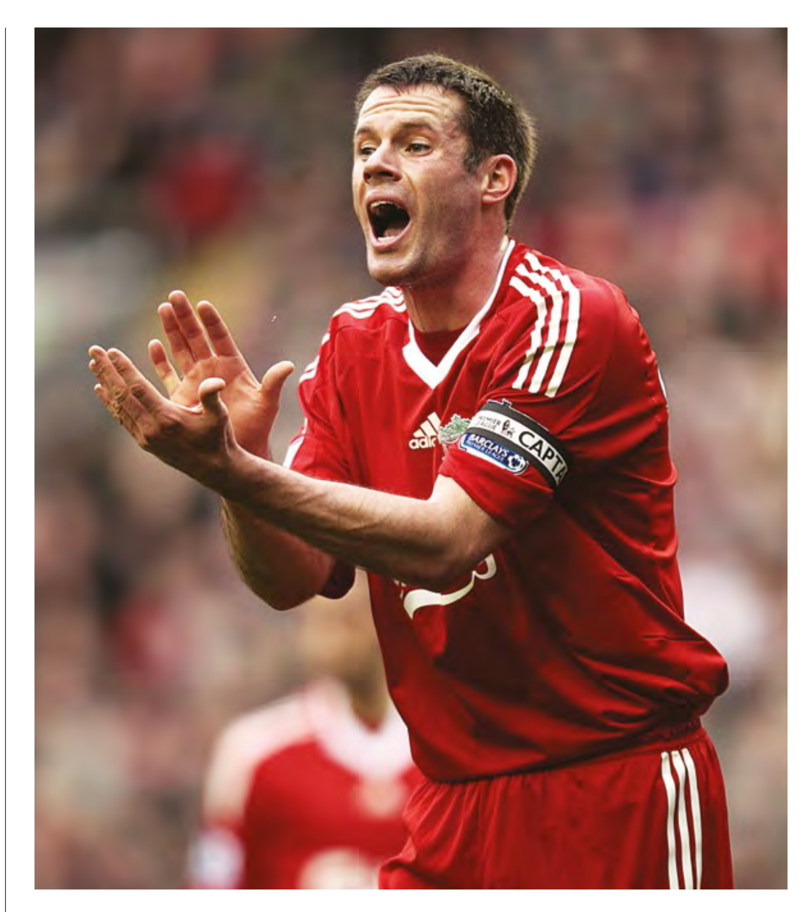
What should I say? The last thing I wanted to do was bore him with stories about me. I wanted to ask him questions – about Liverpool's title chances, about Steven Gerrard and Fernando Torres, about playing at Anfield and winning the European Cup. About what it was like to be Jamie Carragher.

I cleared my throat: "Err it was nothing really, I..."

"It doesn't look like nothin'!" Carra chopped in, releasing another rippling cackle of laughter. He steadied himself and peered down at the congealed wound beneath the steel framework. "Oof," he said, drawing a sharp intake of breath. "Looks terrible, that. Go on – so what? How did it happen?"

My mouth was dry and tongue already tied, but I began in earnest: "Well, we were patrolling out from our FOB – I mean, our base – in search of the Taliban. It was quite straightforward, you know. And ehmm, my mate Iain, he was at the front and I was behind him."

I paused and looked Carra square in the face. He was hooked. Jamie Carragher was staring at me with his mouth semi-ajar in anticipation.





I continued, hesitantly: "Yeah, so Iain said he needed to cross over this ditch because we needed to change our direction and that. And I said, 'I'm with you mate'."

Carra was perched on the edge of the seat, hands clasped around his right knee, which he had dragged up towards his chest. Because of his stance, he rocked gently, back and forth, and maintained eye contact. I gulped.

"And then it just went bang," I explained, scanning his face for a reaction. His hair was cut short, of course. It was rough around the edges, freshly washed and bristling without a hint of wax. When he smiled he pursed his lips so that they arced upwards towards his cheeks. He muttered "Mmm" under his breath to encourage me. His eyes flashed encouragement in sporadic pulses, like some kind of Morse Code.

"Two of the biggest bangs I've ever heard in my life," I added. "Yeah?" "Yeah," I laughed with embarrassment. "Yeah..." my voice tailed off. I was star-struck and nervous. I didn't want to overdo it.

"Then what?" snapped Carra. "Then what?" I replied. "Yeah. What happened then?"

I snorted nervously and began to formulate a concise narrative in my head. Then the words tumbled out. "It all just went black, I suppose. I must have been blown through the air," I explained. "My first thought was: here are the lads? But I realised there was no chance of me getting up. I couldn't move."

Carra nodded and I continued, growing in confidence. "A few of the lads found me straightaway. This lad called James was a medic and he put a tourniquet on my leg. He'd seen that I'd severed my femoral artery and you can bleed out in six minutes from that."

"****ing hell," said Carra, easing back into the sofa. I started to relax. I started to forget that I was talking to my hero. "It was mad," I said. "It was just confusion. But I knew straightaway when they put that tourniquet on that my leg was bad. I just remember screaming at them. Asking them why they were putting it on, because I wasn't soft, you know what I mean. I knew why they were putting it on."

"Yeah," said Carra. "Jesus," he sighed.

When I was nine, in 1997, Jamie Carragher made his debut for Liverpool. He was following in the footsteps of a handful of young local lads like Steve McManaman and Robbie Fowler. Steven Gerrard's arrival was a year in the offing.

To me, Carra always seemed the most Scouse and he was the obvious choice as an idol. He played full-back like me and he was from Bootle, like me. His small house on Knowsley Road was just around the corner from where I lived at the time with my mum and dad and two sisters on Edith Road.

I'd walk the streets by myself, a mini-man on a solo-mission, clutching a Liverpool shirt or a small laminated squad photo. I'd double-check the numbers on the door until I arrived at his house and slid up the path. Nerves would shudder through me; my stomach would churn like a washing-machine spinning my little insides like cotton.

I'd rap on the door with my tiny knuckles, take two steps back and throw on my best puppy face. Carra's mum would appear at the door and look down at me. "Can I have Jamie's autograph please?" I would ask sheepishly.

"Of course," Paula would reply, offering out a hand to receive the bits I'd brought around. "Come back in a couple of days and I'll make sure he's signed it for you." They were always signed...

"What's the Royal Marines like, then?" Carra probed, swigging from his cup of tea. "Hard," I shot back. There were no nerves any more. It was like having a conversation with Symey or someone I'd known for years. I even flashed the serious eyes at him to emphasise my point.

"Yeah?" "...But boss," I said still shirtless and sweating in my own stale stench. I told him about Lympstone and the beastings and Bottom Field. He barked with belly-laughter when I mentioned Corporal Haigh's opening-day tips on how everyone should wash their willies.

He plied me with questions. What's Afghanistan like? What did they tell you before you went? Were you ever shot at? Are you going to recover? How does the thing with the leg work? I was in a daze, but I answered his questions with as much relish as a batsman stepping forward to the crease and *****ing balls for six.

"Reckon we can do it?" I asked, a cheeky grin spreading across my face. Carra clocked my drift straightaway and smirked as he raised his eyes to the sky, fishing around for a convincing enough answer.

"The league?" he said, teeing himself up for the real answer. He leaned forward like a pundit not a player. "Listen, Manchester United are strong. They've got quality everywhere. They've got a massive advantage." He paused and looked to the ceiling again. "This is probably their best side for ten years," said Carra, eyebrows raised for dramatic effect, each word hammered home.

I nodded and drank in his wisdom. I asked him about Steven Gerrard and Fernando Torres. He told me about Xabi Alonso instead. "Awww, he's quality," he said, waving his hand in front of him like he was pushing away imaginary ciggie smoke and shutting his eyes mid-head-shake. "Everyone goes on about the long passes, the forty-yard ones. But it's the short ones, the little ones to Stevie."



He weaved one hand forwards through mid-air. "And then off we go as a team, then. Down the field. And Torres is away." He raised a hand to pinch his nose and glanced upwards once more. "We'll see," he said, lowering his head and smiling straight at me. "We'll see."

We spoke some more and my heart bulged with pride when he regaled me face-to-face about Istanbul. It was only half-an-hour or so of conversation in my living room but it will live with me forever.

When it was time for him to leave, he hoisted himself up off the couch and leant over me to offer a firm handshake. "Okay, good lad," he said, holding the handshake long and hard. "Listen, you take it easy, yeah? You get yourself going. Keep turning them screws and you'll be back up on your feet in no time. We'll have you playing five-a-side before you know it."

He crackled a final laugh at his own joke and reeled back rubbing his hands together. "Right, I'm going to give your dad my number. It's there for you to give me a shout whenever you need me, okay? Whenever you need anything," he looked me square in the face, "bell me yeah?"

I nodded and gulped. The credits of Deal or No Deal rolled as Noel turned and hung his head, preparing to pick up the pieces once again.

My dad ushered Carra out of the front door and I sat in silence and felt something I thought I'd never feel again in my life. It was pure joy. The car journey back to Selly Oak Hospital that afternoon had threatened to be about as chirpy as a funeral procession. Instead, I lay sprawled across the back seat of my dad's car, happy in a haze of warmth, smiling a big beaming grin.

Everything in my life seemed brighter and better and less complicated. A quick chat with a lad who had lived around the corner but just happened to have a God-given talent for kicking a ball had peeled me off the deck and dusted me down.

I no longer felt like I was just a cripple who lay about in his own **** all day; a lad with no *******s who was destined to walk with a limp for the rest of his days. Because I was on first-name terms with Jamie Carragher and he wanted to know about me. He had given my dad his number and said that I could call him whenever I felt life was beating me. I felt ten feet tall.

They say you should never meet your heroes. I say, "If that's the case, don't have **** heroes." Don't settle for anything less than the best.



■ You'll Never Walk by Andy Grant, is published by de Coubertin Books and available now.



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Neil Mellor

Jürgen Klopp has strengthened the club's bond with the fans

Before Liverpool played their Champions League qualifier against Hoffenheim in August the bookies produced their usual list of teams that were considered favourites to win the competition. Liverpool weren't one of them.

Yet here we are, in another Champions League final against Real Madrid. It shows how Jürgen Klopp's team have grown.

Just to get back into the Champions League was an achievement, but then came the progress through the group and knockout stages as Liverpool played hugely enjoyable football without too much expectation. Now we're in the final, and deservedly so.

Although I was injured at the time, I was part of the Liverpool squad that reached the Champions League final in 2005 and I remember the excitement, but there was also belief and confidence in that dressing-room.

AC Milan were the favourites in the same way Real Madrid will be seen by many as the favourites now, but we had togetherness, belief that got us through. Without it the lads could have crumbled when 3-0 down at half-time in Turkey, but the resilience was there and that will be required by this Liverpool team if things don't go their way at certain times in Kiev.

How do Liverpool beat Real Madrid? By attacking the way they have done in the Champions League all season. Liverpool must play with bravery, as they did particularly well against Man City, and go into the final with the mindset of: we'll show you our strengths and play to them.

There will be times when Liverpool have to defend well and maybe ride our luck, but if Klopp's attacking force is firing then there should be huge belief that Real Madrid can be beaten because they are definitely vulnerable defensively. That was evident against Juventus and Bayern Munich and this Liverpool team can get at them.

Inevitably there will be a lot of focus on Mo Salah and Cristiano Ronaldo. On this season's form Salah stands right next to Ronaldo when you compare the two. Ronaldo and Lionel Messi have been the standout players in European football for years, but the goals Salah has scored in the Premier League and Champions League this season puts him on par with both at the moment.

To score over 40 goals in a season is quite incredible. It's a team game and there is no doubt Roberto Firmino, Sadio Mane and the others have played their parts, but Salah has been absolutely outstanding and he has been producing his best form on the big occasions.

Salah, Mane and Firmino have scored 31 goals in Europe this season, a remarkable number in a team that has stood up and handled the big occasions against Porto, Man City and Roma. Now there is one last big occasion to handle and if Liverpool beat Real Madrid in Kiev it will be as huge an achievement as it was when AC Milan were beaten in Istanbul.

Just like ourselves in 2005, this group of players weren't fancied to win the Champions League, even after winning their group. All the talk was of PSG, Real Madrid, Bayern Munich, Man City and Barcelona, so it would be a massive achievement to win a sixth European Cup this season.

We've all enjoyed this journey. The football has been thrilling to watch and it has earned results, something Klopp deserves the utmost credit for. He has really progressed the football club and he's getting the best out of players, but one of his biggest strengths – as it was when he first arrived at Anfield – is the connection he has with the supporters. There is a real feeling that we're all in it together: players, manager, fans.

Whether Liverpool beat Real Madrid or lose in Kiev, the manager has created a connection and a installed a mentality that we experience everything together. It shouldn't be underestimated how he has forged that unity because such togetherness can help you win a Champions League final...



In it together: fans, players, manager





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Mohamed Salah models the home kit Liverpool will wear for the 2018/19 season. Against which club did Salah score his first Premier League goal for LFC while wearing red? **Answer on page 98**

All the latest news as the club and its players strive to make a difference on and off the pitch

CLUB



MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN MALAWI

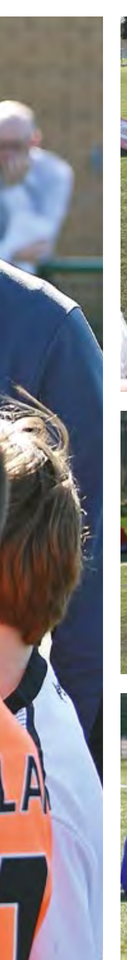
Striker Sadio backs new joint-initiative to help educate and protect youngsters against HIV



In addition to delivering its own programmes the LFC Foundation also works in partnership with these local charities and not-for-profit organisations: Alder Hey Children's Charity, University of Liverpool & Into University, and Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM).

Just recently LSTM, working to break the cycle of poor health and poverty through pioneering research, has teamed up with the LFC Foundation to deliver a new project encouraging youngsters in Malawi to access education and health services, to help in the fight against HIV.











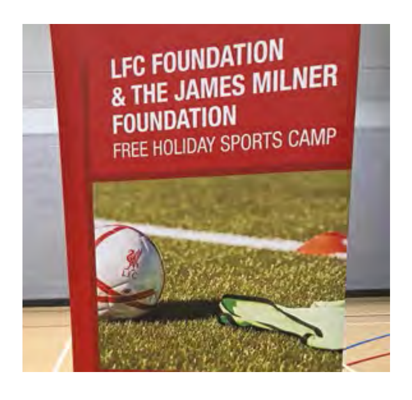
Half-term means fun!



The LFC Foundation held two half-term activity camps for local youngsters throughout the Easter break. A total of 140 boys and girls, aged between four and 14, attended the multi-sports sessions at Anfield Sports & Community Centre (ASCC) and Rainhill High School.

At ASCC, participants enjoyed football drills, dodgeball, handball, glow-in-the-dark sports and fundamental skills and teamwork training. It was supported by the James Milner Foundation (JMF), which donated £16,000 to the LFC Foundation in 2016 to fund a series of three-day activity camps at ASCC during school half-term breaks. Like the LFC Foundation, JMF promotes healthy activities among young people across the UK by focusing on the development, improvement and provision of sporting opportunities.

Children attending the Rainhill High sessions also took part in a range of multi-sport activities such as football drills, handball and multi-skills.





Reds striker Sadio Mane was on hand to help launch the programme at Anfield Sports & Community Centre where he attended a training session with coaches from the southeast African country and the LFC Foundation. The Senegalese star is lending his support after visiting the LSTM back in December.

In Malawi the number of people living with HIV is one of the highest in the world and the younger generation account for 50 per cent of new infections, many of whom have little or no knowledge about prevention and transmission of disease.

Using the medium of football and the power of the LFC badge, the new joint-project will deliver sports-based engagement activities for young people to access a range of available health services and education about sexually-transmitted diseases.

LSTM director Janet Hemingway says: "We are excited to be working with the LFC Foundation on this important project. Football's appeal is universal with the power to break down barriers and reduce the stigma associated with HIV testing.

"Working with a global brand's charity like the LFC Foundation will enable us to further impact the lives of people in vulnerable populations."

Poetry in motion!

Aashvi's awesome winning poem on the theme of resilience and never giving up

The LFC Foundation's mission, as the club's official charity, is to bring together the LFC family to create life-changing opportunities for children and young people. We're all part of Liverpool Football Club and we all want to look out for each other, particularly those in need.

One such initiative is Premier League Kicks, a flagship community programme which combines football coaching with health, education and personal development for girls and boys. Then there is Premier League Primary Stars, which enables us to use the power of the LFC crest to help inspire local schoolchildren to develop skills and ambition in both educational and sporting settings.

Its Premier League Writing Stars is a competition launched last September for children aged five to 11, encouraging them to try their hand at creative writing. Just recently six-year-old Aashvi Agarwal from Holy Cross Catholic Primary School in Liverpool was named as the North West regional winner for Key Stage 1.

Aashvi's poem *Count to Ten* was selected by an all-star judging panel and will now be published in a special Writing Stars poetry book this year.

Count to Ten by Aashvi Agarwal

Sometimes things can be hard,
But never give up.
You just need to bounce back,
And never give up.

Never be scared,
But instead work hard,
Keep faith in yourself,
And always work hard.

Sometimes you need to count to ten,
And try, try and try again.







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KENNY IN THE BOOK

Reds legend immortalised anew in fab children's educational book created with Standard Chartered

Pupils at New Park Primary School, near to Anfield Stadium, got a treat when Reds legend dropped by with his new book!

Entitled *King Kenny*, it's been created by LFC's main sponsor Standard Chartered to help support the club's Red Neighbours programme in creating memorable experiences for young people in the local area. Signed copies were donated to the school on behalf of Standard Chartered and the Marina Dalglish Appeal.

The book and an accompanying short film form part of Standard Chartered's year-long Power of Numbers campaign celebrating 125 years of Liverpool FC.

King Kenny tells the story of one of football's all-time greats, capturing valuable lessons from his inspiring journey both on and off the pitch. It was written in rhyming couplets by children's author Gavin McCormack and aims to give young fans around the world a new perspective on the LFC legend.



Emma Sheller from Standard Chartered said: "We couldn't mark LFC's 125th birthday without celebrating the number 7!

"Kenny Dalglish is a man who has inspired Liverpool Football Club and its fans across generations. His passion, experience and influence has reached the hearts of many, and we created this children's book and short film to celebrate this legacy.

"It is timeless – full of tradition, virtue and lessons that we can all learn from and develop within ourselves."

King Kenny is available as a free interactive e-book at sc.com/lfc125/kingkenny and fans can download a PDF copy in six languages: English, Traditional & Simplified Chinese, Bahasa Melayu, Bahasa Indonesia, Vietnamese and Korean. An audio version is also available online.

ANFIELD TREAT FOR JUNIORS

The last home game of the season will be a special occasion for these local young fans



Liverpool first-team stars Jordan Henderson and Trent Alexander-Arnold met with children from local schools recently to hand over free tickets to a Liverpool FC game.

The club's Red Neighbours programme invited pupils from Pinehurst, St Margaret's Anfield, Florence Melly and St Francis De Sales primary schools to Anfield to meet the Reds first-teamers, who handed each school eleven tickets to the final Premier League game of the season against Brighton and Hove Albion on Sunday 13 May at Anfield.

As part of the Red Neighbours focus on creating memorable experiences for young people, over 1,000 free tickets were donated to local schools during the 2017/18 campaign.

Each home game saw 55 tickets provided, with 21 primary and four high schools in the L4, L5 and L6 postcodes of the city benefiting across the season.

Meanwhile Millstead Special Educational Needs School has thanked Red Neighbours for providing pupils with many "wonderful" matchday experiences this season.

Children from the school, located close to Anfield in L5, were invited to various home games throughout 2017/18 as part of the




Hendo and Trent with the local schoolchildren











free ticket initiative. Pupils with a range of additional needs, both wheelchair users and ambulant children, attended the fixtures against Huddersfield Town, Chelsea, Southampton and Newcastle United, with the school receiving eleven tickets for each game.

Lynn Irwin, business manager at Millstead School, said: "Our children have had wonderful experiences attending Anfield to watch the mighty Reds in action this season.

"Providing them with these opportunities has had a really positive impact and has given families experiences that they wouldn't normally get to have. We'd like to send a massive thank-you to Red Neighbours and Liverpool Football Club for these wonderful opportunities."



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QUIZ ANSWERS: LIVERPOOL p5: There were approximately 5,000 Liverpool supporters at the Stadio Olimpico for the second leg of the Champions League semi-final with AS Roma; **FOOTBALL p17:** Jordan Henderson is hoping to follow in the footsteps of Ron Yeats (1966), Tommy Smith (1973), Emlyn Hughes (1976, 1977 and 1978), Phil Thompson (1981), Graeme Souness (1984), Phil Neal (1985), Sami Hyypia (2001), Steven Gerrard (2005 and 2007) and James Milner (2016); **CLUB p87:** Mohamed Salah's first Premier League goal in a red shirt came against Watford in August 2017.


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